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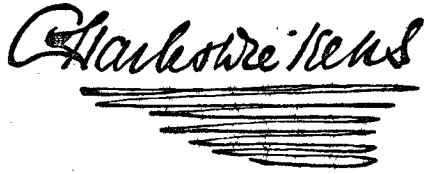
THE LIFE

OF



D. Maclise, R.A.

R. Graves A.R.A.

CHARLES DICKENS.

ÆT 27

THE LIFE

OF

CHARLES DICKENS.

By JOHN FORSTER.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

LIBRARY EDITION (BEING THE SEVENTEENTH THOUSAND).

VOLUME THE FIRST.

1812—1847.

LONDON:

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.

1876.

LONDON:
BRADBURY, AGNEW, & CO., PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.

TO THE DAUGHTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS,

MY GODDAUGHTER MARY

AND

HER SISTER KATE,

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED BY THEIR FRIEND,

AND THEIR FATHER'S FRIEND AND EXECUTOR,

JOHN FORSTER.

I.

'. . . If a Life be delayed till interest and envy are at an end, we may hope for impartiality, but 'must expect little intelligence; for the incidents which give excellence to biography are of a 'volatile and evanescent kind. . . . .'—JOHNSON (*Rambler*, 60).

II.

'I cannot conceive a more perfect mode of writing any man's life, than not only relating 'all the most important events of it in their order, but interweaving what he privately wrote, 'and said.'—BOSWELL (*Life of Johnson*).

III.

'. . . . This Third Volume throws a new light and character to me over the Work at 'large. I incline to consider this Biography as taking rank, in essential respects, parallel to 'Boswell himself, though on widely different grounds. Boswell, by those genial abridgements 'and vivid face to face pictures of Johnson's thoughts, conversational ways and modes of 'appearance among his fellow-creatures, has given, as you often hear me say, such a delinea-'tion of a man's existence as was never given by another man. By quite different resources, 'by those sparkling, clear, and sunny utterances of Dickens's own (bits of *auto*-biography 'unrivalled in clearness and credibility) which were at your disposal, and have been inter-'calated every now and then, you have given to every intelligent eye the power of looking 'down to the very bottom of Dickens's mode of existing in this world; and, I say, have per-'formed a feat which, except in Boswell, the unique, I know not where to parallel. So long as 'Dickens is interesting to his fellow men, here will be seen, face to face, what Dickens's 'manner of existing was. His bright and joyful sympathy with everything around him; his 'steady practicality, withal; the singularly solid business talent he continually had; and, 'deeper than all, if one has the eye to see deep enough, dark, fateful, silent elements, tragical 'to look upon, and hiding, amid dazzling radiances as of the sun, the elements of death itself. 'Those two American journeys especially transcend in tragic interest, to a thinking reader, 'most things one has seen in writing!'—THOMAS CARLYLE (*Letter to the Author*, 16 February, 1874).

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BOOK FIRST.

CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH.

1812—1836. ÆT. 1—24.

I. Earliest Years.
II. Hard Experiences in Boyhood.
III. School Days and Start in Life.
IV. Newspaper Reporting and Writing.
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THE LIFE OF

CHARLES DICKENS

I.

EARLIEST YEARS.

1812—1822.

CHARLES DICKENS, the most popular novelist of the century and one of the greatest humourists that England has produced, was born at Landport in Portsea on Friday the seventh of February, 1812. PORTSEA: 1812.

His father, John Dickens, a clerk in the Navy-pay office, was at this time stationed in the Portsmouth dockyard. He had made acquaintance with the lady, Elizabeth Barrow, who became afterwards his wife, through her elder brother, Thomas Barrow, also engaged on the establishment at Somerset-house; and she bore him in all a family of eight children, of whom two died in infancy. The eldest, Fanny (born 1810), was followed by Charles (entered in the baptismal register of Portsea as Charles John Huffham, though on the very rare occasions when he subscribed that name he wrote Huffam); by another son, named Alfred, who died in childhood; by Letitia (born 1816); by another daughter, Harriet, who died also in childhood; by Frederick (born 1820); by Alfred Lamert (born 1822); and by Augustus (born 1827); of all of whom only the second daughter now survives. Family of John Dickens.

Portsea: 1812-14.

Walter Scott tells us, in his fragment of autobiography, speaking of the strange remedies applied to his lameness, that he remembered lying on the floor in the parlour of his grandfather's farm-house, swathed up in a sheepskin warm from the body of the sheep, being then not three years old. David Copperfield's memory goes beyond this. He represents himself seeing so far back into the blank of his infancy, as to discern therein his

Birthplace of Charles Dickens (1871).

mother and her servant, dwarfed to his sight by stooping down or kneeling on the floor, and himself going unsteadily from the one to the other. He admits this may be fancy, though he believes the power of observation in numbers of very young children to be quite wonderful for its closeness and accuracy, and thinks that the recollection of most of us can go farther back into such times

Child's memories.

than many of us suppose. But what he adds is certainly not fancy. 'If it should appear from anything I may set down in 'this narrative that I was a child of close observation, or that as 'a man I have a strong memory of my childhood, I undoubtedly 'lay claim to both of these characteristics.' Applicable as it might be to David Copperfield, this was unaffectedly true of Charles Dickens. PORTSEA: 1812-14.

He has often told me that he remembered the small front garden to the house at Portsea,* from which he was taken away when he was two years old, and where, watched by a nurse through a low kitchen-window almost level with the gravel-walk, he trotted about with something to eat, and his little elder sister with him. He was carried from the garden one day to see the soldiers exercise; and I perfectly recollect, that, on our being at Portsmouth together while he was writing *Nickleby*, he recognized the exact shape of the military parade seen by him as a very infant, on the same spot, a quarter of a century before. Ætat. 2.

When his father was again brought up by his duties to London from Portsmouth, they went into lodgings in Norfolk-street, Middlesex-hospital; and it lived also in the child's memory that they had come away from Portsea in the snow. Their home, shortly after, was again changed, on the elder Dickens being placed upon duty in Chatham dockyard; and the house where he lived in Chatham, which had a plain-looking whitewashed plaster-front and a small garden before and behind, was in St. Mary's-place, otherwise called the Brook, and next door to a Baptist meeting-house called Providence-chapel of which a Mr. Giles to be presently mentioned was minister. Charles at this time was between four and five years old;† and here he stayed till he was nine. Here the most durable of his early impressions were LONDON 1814-16. Norfolk-street, Middlesex-hospital. CHATHAM 1816-21.

* The woodcut on the preceding page is from a recent photograph. The house is now (1873) occupied by members of the same family to whom it belonged at the birth of Dickens, whose father was a tenant of their father.

† 'I shall cut this letter short, for 'they are playing Masaniello in the 'drawing-room, and I feel much as I 'used to do when I was a small child 'a few miles off, and Somebody (who 'I wonder, and which way did *She* 'go when she died) hummed the 'evening hymn to me, and I cried on 'the pillow.' From Gadshill, 24 Sep. 1857: 'being here again, or as much 'here as anywhere in particular.'

Chatham: 1816-21.

received; and the associations that were around him when he died, were those which at the outset of his life had affected him most strongly.

The house called Gadshill-place stands on the strip of highest ground in the main road between Rochester and Gravesend. Very often had we travelled past it together, many years before it became his home; and never without some allusion to what he told me when first I saw it in his company, that amid the recollections connected with his childhood it held always a prominent place, for, upon first seeing it as he came from Chatham with his father, and looking up at it with much admiration, he had been promised that he might himself live in it or in some such house when he came to be a man, if he would only work hard enough. Which for a long time was his ambition. The story is a pleasant one, and receives authentication at the opening of one of his essays on travelling abroad, when as he passes along the road to Canterbury there crosses it a vision of his former self.

A vision of boyhood at Gadshill.

'So smooth was the old high road, and so fresh were the horses, 'and so fast went I, that it was midway between Gravesend and 'Rochester, and the widening river was bearing the ships, white 'sailed or black-smoked, out to sea, when I noticed by the way-'side a very queer small boy.

'"Holloa!" said I, to the very queer small boy, "where do '"you live?"

'"At Chatham," says he.

'"What do you do there?" says I.

'"I go to school," says he.

'I took him up in a moment, and we went on. Presently, the 'very queer small boy says, "This is Gads-hill we are coming to, '"where Falstaff went out to rob those travellers, and ran '"away."

'"You know something about Falstaff, eh?" said I.

'"All about him," said the very queer small boy. "I am old '"(I am nine), and I read all sorts of books. But *do* let us stop '"at the top of the hill, and look at the house there, if you '"please!"

'"You admire that house?" said I.

'"Bless you, sir," said the very queer small boy, "when I was CHATHAM: 1816-21.
'"not more than half as old as nine, it used to be a treat for
'"me to be brought to look at it. And now I am nine, I
'"come by myself to look at it. And ever since I can recollect,
'"my father, seeing me so fond of it, has often said to me, *If*
'"*you were to be very persevering and were to work hard, you might*
'"*some day come to live in it.* Though that's impossible!" said
'the very queer small boy, drawing a low breath, and now staring
'at the house out of window with all his might.

'I was rather amazed to be told this by the very queer small
'boy; for that house happens to be *my* house, and I have reason
'to believe that what he said was true.'

The queer small boy was indeed himself. He was a very little The queer small boy.
and a very sickly boy. He was subject to attacks of violent spasm which disabled him for any active exertion. He was never a good little cricket-player; he was never a first-rate hand at marbles, or peg-top, or prisoner's base; but he had great pleasure in watching the other boys, officers' sons for the most part, at these games, reading while they played; and he had always the belief that this early sickness had brought to himself one inestimable advantage, in the circumstance of his weak health having strongly inclined him to reading. It will not appear, as my narrative moves on, that he owed much to his parents, or was other than in his first letter to Washington Irving he described himself to have been, a 'very small and not-over-particularly-'taken-care-of boy;' but he has frequently been heard to say that his first desire for knowledge, and his earliest passion for reading, were awakened by his mother, from whom he learnt the Mother's lessons.
rudiments not only of English, but also, a little later, of Latin. She taught him regularly every day for a long time, and taught him, he was convinced, thoroughly well. I once put to him a question in connection with this to which he replied in almost exactly the words he placed five years later in the mouth of David Copperfield. 'I faintly remember her teaching me the alphabet;
'and when I look upon the fat black letters in the primer, the
'puzzling novelty of their shapes, and the easy good nature of O and
'S, always seem to present themselves before me as they used to do.'

Chatham: 1816-21.

Preparatory day-school.

Then followed the preparatory day-school, a school for girls and boys to which he went with his sister Fanny, and which was in a place called Rome (pronounced Room) lane. Revisiting Chatham in his manhood, and looking for the place, he found it had been pulled down to make a new street, 'ages' before: but, out of the distance of the ages, arose nevertheless a not dim impression, that it had been over a dyer's shop; that he went up steps to it; that he had frequently grazed his knees in doing so; and that in trying to scrape the mud off a very unsteady little shoe, he generally got his leg over the scraper.* Other similar memories of childhood have dropped from him occasionally in his lesser writings; whose readers may remember how vividly portions of his boyhood are reproduced in his fancy of the Christmas-tree, and will hardly have forgotten what he says, in his thoughtful little paper on Nurse's-stories, of the doubtful places and people to which children may be introduced before they are six years old, and forced, night after night, to go back to against their wills, by servants to whom they are entrusted. That childhood exaggerates what it sees, too, has he not tenderly told? How he thought the Rochester High-street must be at least as wide as Regent-street, which he afterwards discovered to be little better than a lane; how the public clock in it, supposed to be the finest clock in the world, turned out to be as moon-faced and weak a clock as a man's eyes ever saw; and how, in its town-hall, which had appeared to him once so glorious a structure that he had set it up in his mind as the model on which the genie of the lamp built the palace for Aladdin, he had painfully to recognize a mere

Rochester revisited.

School in Rome-lane.

* 'The mistress of the establishment holds no place in our memory; but, rampant on one eternal doormat, in an eternal entry long and narrow, is a puffy pug-dog, with a personal animosity towards us, who triumphs over Time. The bark of that baleful Pug, a certain radiating way he had of snapping at our undefended legs, the ghastly grinning of his moist black muzzle and white teeth, and the insolence of his crisp tail curled like a pastoral crook, all live and flourish. From an otherwise unaccountable association of him with a fiddle, we conclude that he was of French extraction, and his name *Fidèle*. He belonged to some female, chiefly inhabiting a back parlour, whose life appears to us to have been consumed in sniffing, and in wearing a brown beaver bonnet.'—*Reprinted Pieces*, 287. (In such quotations as are made from his writings, the *Charles Dickens Edition* is used.)

mean little heap of bricks, like a chapel gone demented. Yet not so painfully, either, when second thoughts wisely came. 'Ah! 'who was I that I should quarrel with the town for being changed 'to me, when I myself had come back, so changed, to it? All 'my early readings and early imaginations dated from this place, 'and I took them away so full of innocent construction and 'guileless belief, and I brought them back so worn and torn, so 'much the wiser and so much the worse!' CHATHAM: 1816-21.

And here I may at once expressly mention, what already has been hinted, that even as Fielding described himself and his belongings in Captain Booth and Amelia, and protested always that he had writ in his books nothing more than he had seen in life, so it may be said of Dickens in more especial relation to David Copperfield. Many guesses have been made since his death, connecting David's autobiography with his own; accounting, by means of such actual experiences, for the so frequent recurrence in his writings of the prison-life, its humour and pathos, described in them with such wonderful reality; and discovering, in what David tells Steerforth at school of the stories he had read in his childhood, what it was that had given the bent to his own genius. There is not only truth in all this, but it will very shortly be seen that the identity went deeper than any had supposed, and covered experiences not less startling in the reality than they appear to be in the fiction. Relation of David Copperfield to Charles Dickens.

Of the 'readings' and 'imaginations' which he describes as brought away from Chatham, this authority can tell us. It is one of the many passages in *Copperfield* which are literally true, and its proper place is here. 'My father had left a small collection 'of books in a little room upstairs to which I had access (for it 'adjoined my own), and which nobody else in our house ever 'troubled. From that blessed little room, *Roderick Random*, '*Peregrine Pickle*, *Humphrey Clinker*, *Tom Jones*, the *Vicar of* '*Wakefield*, *Don Quixote*, *Gil Blas*, and *Robinson Crusoe* came 'out, a glorious host, to keep me company. They kept alive my 'fancy, and my hope of something beyond that place and time,— 'they, and the *Arabian Nights*, and the *Tales of the Genii*,—and 'did me no harm; for, whatever harm was in some of them, was A small but good library. D. C. for C. D.

Chatham: 1816-21.

'not there for me; *I* knew nothing of it. It is astonishing to 'me now, how I found time, in the midst of my porings and 'blunderings over heavier themes, to read those books as I did. 'It is curious to me how I could ever have consoled myself 'under my small troubles (which were great troubles to me), by 'impersonating my favourite characters in them. . . . I have 'been Tom Jones (a child's Tom Jones, a harmless creature) for 'a week together. I have sustained my own idea of Roderick 'Random for a month at a stretch, I verily believe. I had a 'greedy relish for a few volumes of voyages and travels—I forget 'what, now—that were on those shelves; and for days and days 'I can remember to have gone about my region of our house, 'armed with the centre-piece out of an old set of boot-trees: the 'perfect realisation of Captain Somebody, of the royal British 'navy, in danger of being beset by savages, and resolved to sell

Summer evening picture.

'his life at a great price. . . . When I think of it, the picture 'always rises in my mind, of a summer evening, the boys at play 'in the churchyard, and I sitting on my bed, reading as if for 'life. Every barn in the neighbourhood, every stone in the 'church, and every foot of the churchyard, had some association 'of its own, in my mind, connected with these books, and stood 'for some locality made famous in them. I have seen Tom 'Pipes go climbing up the church-steeple; I have watched Strap, 'with the knapsack on his back, stopping to rest himself upon 'the wicket-gate; and I *know* that Commodore Trunnion held 'that club with Mr. Pickle, in the parlor of our little village ale-'house.' Every word of this personal recollection had been written down as fact, some years before it found its way into *David Copperfield;* the only change in the fiction being his omission of the name of a cheap series of novelists then in course of publication, by means of which his father had become happily the owner of so large a lump of literary treasure in his small collection of books.

Tragedy-writing.

The usual result followed. The child took to writing, himself; and became famous in his childish circle for having written a tragedy called *Misnar*, the Sultan of India, founded (and very literally founded, no doubt) on one of the *Tales of the Genii.* Nor

was this his only distinction. He told a story offhand so well, and sang small comic songs so especially well, that he used to be elevated on chairs and tables, both at home and abroad, for more effective display of these talents; and when he first told me of this, at one of the twelfth-night parties on his eldest son's birthday, he said he never recalled it that his own shrill little voice of childhood did not again tingle in his ears, and he blushed to think what a horrible little nuisance he must have been to many unoffending grown-up people who were called upon to admire him. CHATHAM 1816-21. Comic-song singing.

His chief ally and encourager in such displays was a youth of some ability, much older than himself, named James Lamert, stepson to his mother's sister and therefore a sort of cousin, who was his great patron and friend in his childish days. Mary, the eldest daughter of Charles Barrow, himself a lieutenant in the navy, had for her first husband a commander in the navy called Allen, on whose death by drowning at Rio Janeiro she had joined her sister, the navy-pay clerk's wife, at Chatham; in which place she subsequently took for her second husband Doctor Lamert, an army-surgeon, whose son James, even after he had been sent to Sandhurst for his education, continued still to visit Chatham from time to time. He had a turn for private theatricals; and as his father's quarters were in the ordnance-hospital there, a great rambling place otherwise at that time almost uninhabited, he had plenty of room in which to get up his entertainments. The staff-doctor himself played his part, and his portrait will be found in *Pickwick*. Cousin Lamert.

By Lamert, I have often heard him say, he was first taken to the theatre at the very tenderest age. He could hardly, however, have been younger than Charles Lamb, whose first experience was of having seen *Artaxerxes* when six years old; and certainly not younger than Walter Scott, who was only four when he saw *As You Like It* on the Bath stage, and remembered having screamed out, *Ain't they brothers?* when scandalised by Orlando and Oliver beginning to fight.* But he was at any rate First taken to theatre.

* 'A few weeks' residence at home 'convinced me, who had till then been 'an only child in the house of my 'grandfather, that a quarrel between 'brothers was a very natural event.'—Lockhart's *Life*, i. 30.

CHATHAM: 1816-21.

old enough to recollect how his young heart leapt with terror as the wicked king Richard, struggling for life against the virtuous Richmond, backed up and bumped against the box in which he was; and subsequent visits to the same sanctuary, as he tells us, revealed to him many wondrous secrets, 'of which not the least 'terrific were, that the witches in *Macbeth* bore an awful resem- 'blance to the thanes and other proper inhabitants of Scotland; 'and that the good king Duncan couldn't rest in his grave, but 'was constantly coming out of it, and calling himself somebody 'else.'

At Mr. Giles's school.

During the last two years of Charles's residence at Chatham, he was sent to a school kept in Clover-lane by the young Baptist minister already named, Mr. William Giles. I have the picture of him here very strongly in my mind as a sensitive, thoughtful, feeble-bodied little boy, with an amount of experience as well as fancy unusual in such a child, and with a dangerous kind of wandering intelligence that a teacher might turn to good or evil, happiness or misery, as he directed it. Nor does the influence of Mr. Giles, such as it was, seem to have been other than favourable. Charles had himself a not ungrateful sense in after years that this first of his masters, in his little cared for childhood, had pronounced him to be a boy of capacity; and when, about half-way through the publication of *Pickwick*, his old teacher sent a silver snuff-box with admiring inscription to 'the inimitable Boz,' it reminded him of praise far more precious obtained by him at his first year's examination in the Clover-lane academy, when his recitation of a piece out of the *Humourist's Miscellany* about Doctor Bolus had received, unless his youthful vanity bewildered him, a double encore. A habit, the only bad one taught him by Mr. Giles, of taking for a time, in very moderate quantities, the snuff called Irish blackguard, was the result of this gift from his old master; but he abandoned it after some few years, and it was never resumed.

Encored in Doctor Bolus.

It was in the boys' playing ground near Clover-lane in which the school stood, that, according to one of his youthful memories, he had been, in the hay-making time, delivered from the dungeons of Seringapatam, an immense pile '(of haycock),' by his country-

men the victorious British 'boy next door and his two cousins),' and had been recognized with ecstacy by his affianced one 'Miss 'Green),' who had come all the way from England '(second house 'in the terrace),' to ransom and marry him. It was in this playing-field, too, as he has himself recorded, he first heard in confidence from one whose father was greatly connected, 'being under govern-'ment,' of the existence of a terrible banditti called *the radicals*, whose principles were that the prince-regent wore stays; that nobody had a right to any salary; and that the army and navy ought to be put down; horrors at which he trembled in his bed, after supplicating that the radicals might be speedily taken and hanged. Nor was it the least of the disappointments in his visit of after life to the scenes of his boyhood to have found this play-field swallowed up by a railway station. It was gone, with its two beautiful trees of hawthorn; and where the hedge, the turf, and all the buttercups and daisies had been, there was nothing but the stoniest of jolting roads.

CHATHAM: 1816-21.

Boyish recollections.

He was not much over nine years old when his father was recalled from Chatham to Somerset-house, and he had to leave this good master, and the old place endeared to him by recollections that clung to him afterwards all his life long. It was here he had made the acquaintance not only of the famous books that David Copperfield specially names, of *Roderick Random*, *Peregrine Pickle*, *Humphrey Clinker*, *Tom Jones*, the *Vicar of Wakefield*, *Don Quixote*, *Gil Blas*, *Robinson Crusoe*, the *Arabian Nights*, and the *Tales of the Genii*, but also of the *Tatler*, the *Spectator*, the *Idler*, the *Citizen of the World*, and Mrs. Inchbald's *Collection of Farces*. These latter had been, as well, in the little library to which access was open to him; and of all of them his earliest remembrance was the having read them over and over at Chatham, not for the first, the second, or the third time. They were a host of friends when he had no single friend; and in leaving the place, he has been often heard to say, he seemed to be leaving them too, and everything that had given his ailing little life its picturesqueness or sunshine. *It was the* birthplace of his fancy; and he hardly knew what store he had set by its busy varieties of change and scene, until he saw the falling cloud that was to hide its pictures from him for ever. The gay

Quitting Chatham: 1821.

Birthplace of his fancy

Chatham: 1821.

bright regiments always going and coming, the continual paradings and firings, the successions of sham-sieges and sham-defences, the plays got up by his cousin in the hospital, the navy-pay yacht in which he had sailed to Sheerness with his father, and the ships floating out in the Medway with their far visions of sea—he was to lose them all. He was never to watch the boys at their games any more, or see them sham over again the sham-sieges and defences. He was to be taken away to London inside the stage-coach Commodore; and Kentish woods and fields, Cobham park and hall, Rochester cathedral and castle, and all the wonderful romance together, including a red-cheeked baby he had been wildly in love with, were to vanish like a dream. 'On the night before we 'came away,' he told me, 'my good master came flitting in among 'the packing-cases to give me Goldsmith's *Bee* as a keepsake. 'Which I kept for his sake, and its own, a long time afterwards.' A longer time afterwards he recollected the stage-coach journey, and in one of his published papers said that never had he forgotten, through all the intervening years, the smell of the damp straw in which he was packed and forwarded, like game carriage-paid. 'There was no other inside passenger, and I consumed my sand-'wiches in solitude and dreariness, and it rained hard all the way, 'and I thought life sloppier than I expected to find it.'

Last night there.

London: 1821-2.

The earliest impressions received and retained by him in London, were of his father's money involvements; and now first he heard mentioned 'the deed,' representing in fact that crisis of his father's affairs which is ascribed in fiction to Mr. Micawber's. He knew it in later days to have been a composition with creditors; though at this earlier date he was conscious of having confounded it with parchments of a much more demoniacal description. One result from the awful document soon showed itself in enforced retrenchment. The family had to take up its abode in a house in Bayham-street, Camden-town.

Bayham-street, Camden-town.

Bayham-street was about the poorest part of the London suburbs then, and the house was a mean small tenement, with a wretched little back-garden abutting on a squalid court. Here was no place for new acquaintances to him: not a boy was near with whom he might hope to become in any way familiar. A washerwoman lived

next door, and a Bow-street officer lived over the way. Many many times has he spoken to me of this, and how he seemed at once to fall into a solitary condition apart from all other boys of his own age, and to sink into a neglected state at home which had always been quite unaccountable to him. 'As I thought,' he said on one occasion very bitterly, 'in the little back-garret in 'Bayham-street, of all I had lost in losing Chatham, what would 'I have given, if I had had anything to give, to have been sent 'back to any other school, to have been taught something any-'where!' He was at another school already, not knowing it. The self-education forced upon him was teaching, all unconsciously as yet, what, for the future that awaited him, it most behoved him to know. LONDON: 1821-2. Self-education.

That he took, from the very beginning of this Bayham-street life, his first impression of that struggling poverty which is nowhere more vividly shown than in the commoner streets of the ordinary London suburb, and which enriched his earliest writings with a freshness of original humour and quite unstudied pathos that gave them much of their sudden popularity, there cannot be a doubt. 'I certainly understood it,' he has often said to me, 'quite as well 'then as I do now.' But he was not conscious yet that he did so understand it, or of the influence it was exerting on his life even then. It seems almost too much to assert of a child, say at nine or ten years old, that his observation of everything was as close and good, or that he had as much intuitive understanding of the character and weaknesses of the grown-up people around him, as when the same keen and wonderful faculty had made him famous among men. But my experience of him led me to put implicit faith in the assertion he unvaryingly himself made, that he had never seen any cause to correct or change what in his boyhood was his own secret impression of anybody, whom he had, as a grown man, the opportunity of testing in later years. First impressions from Bayham-street. Faculty of early observation.

How it came, that, being what he was, he should now have fallen into the misery and neglect of the time about to be described, was a subject on which thoughts were frequently interchanged between us; and on one occasion he gave me a sketch of the character of his father which, as I can here repeat it in the exact

LONDON: 1821-2.

Bayham-street.

words employed by him, will be the best preface I can make to what I feel that I have no alternative but to tell. 'I know my 'father to be as kindhearted and generous a man as ever lived in 'the world. Everything that I can remember of his conduct to 'his wife, or children, or friends, in sickness or affliction, is beyond 'all praise. By me, as a sick child, he has watched night and day, 'unweariedly and patiently, many nights and days. He never 'undertook any business, charge or trust, that he did not zealously, 'conscientiously, punctually, honourably discharge. His industry 'has always been untiring. He was proud of me, in his way, and 'had a great admiration of the comic singing. But, in the ease of 'his temper, and the straitness of his means, he appeared to 'have utterly lost at this time the idea of educating me at all, and 'to have utterly put from him the notion that I had any claim 'upon him, in that regard, whatever. So I degenerated into 'cleaning his boots of a morning, and my own; and making my-'self useful in the work of the little house; and looking after my 'younger brothers and sisters (we were now six in all); and going 'on such poor errands as arose out of our poor way of living.'

His own description of his father.

The cousin by marriage of whom I have spoken, James Lamert, who had lately completed his education at Sandhurst and was waiting in hopes of a commission, lived now with the family in Bayham-street, and had not lost his taste for the stage, or his ingenuities in connection with it. Taking pity on the solitary lad, he made and painted a little theatre for him. It was the only fanciful reality of his present life; but it could not supply what he missed most sorely, the companionship of boys of his own age, with whom he might share in the advantages of school, and contend for its prizes. His sister Fanny was at about this time elected as a pupil to the royal academy of music; and he has told me what a stab to his heart it was, thinking of his own disregarded condition, to see her go away to begin her education, amid the tearful good wishes of everybody in the house.

A small theatre made for him.

Nevertheless, as time went on, his own education still unconsciously went on as well, under the sternest and most potent of teachers; and, neglected and miserable as he was, he managed gradually to transfer to London all the dreaminess and all the

romance with which he had invested Chatham. There were then at the top of Bayham-street some almshouses, and were still when he re-visited it with me nearly twenty-seven years ago; and to go to this spot, he told me, and look from it over the dust-heaps and dock-leaves and fields (no longer there when we saw it together) at the cupola of St. Paul's looming through the smoke, was a treat that served him for hours of vague reflection afterwards. To be taken out for a walk into the real town, especially if it were anywhere about Covent-garden or the Strand, perfectly entranced him with pleasure. But, most of all, he had a profound attraction of repulsion to St. Giles's. If he could only induce whomsoever took him out to take him through Seven-dials, he was supremely happy. 'Good Heaven!' he would exclaim, 'what 'wild visions of prodigies of wickedness, want, and beggary, arose 'in my mind out of that place!' He was all this time, the reader will remember, still subject to continual attacks of illness, and, by reason of them, a very small boy even for his age.

LONDON: 1821-2. Bayham-street. St. Paul's. St. Giles's.

That part of his boyhood is now very near of which, when the days of fame and prosperity came to him, he felt the weight upon his memory as a painful burthen until he could lighten it by sharing it with a friend; and an accident I will presently mention led him first to reveal it. There is, however, an interval of some months still to be described, of which, from conversations or letters that passed between us, after or because of this confidence, and that already have yielded fruit to these pages, I can supply some vague and desultory notices. The use thus made of them, it is due to myself to remark, was contemplated then; for though, long before his death, I had ceased to believe it likely that I should survive to write about him, he had never withdrawn the wish at this early time strongly expressed, or the confidences, not only then but to the very eve of his death reposed in me, that were to enable me to fulfil it.* The fulfilment indeed he had

Desire that I should write of him.

* The reader will forgive my quoting from a letter of the date of the 22nd April, 1848. 'I desire no better 'for my fame, when my personal 'dustiness shall be past the control of 'my love of order, than such a bio-'grapher and such a critic.' 'You 'know me better,' he wrote, resuming the same subject on the 6th of July, 1862, 'than any other man does, or

London: 1821-2.

himself rendered more easy by partially uplifting the veil in *David Copperfield.*

Bayham-street.

The visits made from Bayham-street were chiefly to two connections of the family, his mother's elder brother, and his godfather. The latter, who was a rigger, and mast, oar, and block-maker, lived at Limehouse in a substantial handsome sort of way, and

At his godfather's.

was kind to his godchild. It was always a great treat to him to go to Mr. Huffham's; and the London night-sights as he returned were a perpetual joy and marvel. Here, too, the comic-singing accomplishment was brought into play so greatly to the admiration of one of the godfather's guests, an honest boat-builder, that he pronounced the little lad to be a 'progidy.' The visits to the uncle who was at this time fellow-clerk with his father, in Somerset-house, were nearer home. Mr. Thomas Barrow, the eldest of his mother's family, had broken his leg in a fall; and, while laid up with this illness, his lodging was in Gerrard-street, Soho, in the upper part of the house of a worthy gentleman then recently deceased, a bookseller named Manson, father to the partner in the celebrated firm of Christie and Manson, whose widow at the time carried on the business. Attracted by the look of the lad as he went upstairs, these good people lent him books to amuse him; among them Miss Porter's *Scottish Chiefs*, Holbein's *Dance of Death*, and George Colman's *Broad Grins*. The latter seized

Stolen visit to Covent-garden.

his fancy very much; and he was so impressed by its description of Covent-garden, in the piece called the Elder-brother, that he

'ever will.' 'Shall I leave you my 'life in MS. when I die?' he had written in 1846. 'There are some 'things in it that would touch you 'very much, and that might go on 'the same shelf with the first volume 'of Holcroft's.' The time when I

Autobiographical fragment.

first saw the fragment of autobiography to be used in my next section, and his own feeling respecting it, appear in a note then made by myself. '20 January, 1849. 'The 'description may make none of the 'impression on others that the reality 'made on him. . . . Highly probable 'that it may never see the light. No 'wish. Left to J. F. or others.' The first number of *David Copperfield* appeared five months after this date; but though I knew, even before he adapted his fragment to the eleventh number, that he had now abandoned the notion of completing it under his own name, the *no wish* was never in any way subsequently modified. The manuscript of the fragment, I may add, was without an erasure; as in the writing of an ordinary letter.

stole down to the market by himself to compare it with the book. He remembered, as he said in telling me this, snuffing up the flavour of the faded cabbage-leaves as if it were the very breath of comic fiction. Nor was he far wrong, as comic fiction then, and for some time after, was. It was reserved for himself to give sweeter and fresher breath to it. Many years were to pass first, but he was beginning already to make the trial. LONDON: 1822. Bayham-street.

His uncle was shaved by a very odd old barber out of Dean-street, Soho, who was never tired of reviewing the events of the last war, and especially of detecting Napoleon's mistakes, and re-arranging his whole life for him on a plan of his own. The boy wrote a description of this old barber, but never had courage to show it. At about the same time, taking for his model the description of the canon's housekeeper in *Gil Blas*, he sketched a deaf old woman who waited on them in Bayham-street, and who made delicate hashes with walnut-ketchup. As little did he dare to show this, either; though he thought it, himself, extremely clever. First efforts at description.

In Bayham-street, meanwhile, affairs were going on badly; the poor boy's visits to his uncle, while the latter was still kept a prisoner by his accident, were interrupted by another attack of fever; and on his recovery the mysterious 'deed' had again come uppermost. His father's resources were so low, and all his expedients so thoroughly exhausted, that trial was to be made whether his mother might not come to the rescue. The time was arrived for her to exert herself, she said; and she 'must do 'something.' The godfather down at Limehouse was reported to have an Indian connection. People in the East Indies always sent their children home to be educated. She would set up a school. They would all grow rich by it. And then, thought the sick boy, 'perhaps even I might go to school myself.' His mother exerting herself.

A house was soon found at number four, Gower-street north; a large brass plate on the door announced MRS. DICKENS'S ESTABLISHMENT; and the result I can give in the exact words of the then small actor in the comedy, whose hopes it had raised so high. 'I left, at a great many other doors, a great many circulars calling 'attention to the merits of the establishment. Yet nobody ever Gower-street north.

London: 1822. Gower-street north.

'came to school, nor do I recollect that anybody ever proposed 'to come, or that the least preparation was made to receive any-'body. But I know that we got on very badly with the butcher 'and baker; that very often we had not too much for dinner; and

His father arrested.

'that at last my father was arrested.' The interval between the sponging-house and the prison was passed by the sorrowful lad in running errands and carrying messages for the prisoner, delivered with swollen eyes and through shining tears; and the last words said to him by his father before he was finally carried to the Marshalsea, were to the effect that the sun was set upon him for ever. 'I really believed at the time,' said Dickens to me, 'that they had broken my heart.' He took afterwards ample revenge for this false alarm by making all the world laugh at them in *David Copperfield*.

The readers of Mr. Micawber's history who remember David's first visit to the Marshalsea prison, and how upon seeing the turnkey he recalled the turnkey in the blanket in *Roderick Random*, will read with curious interest what follows, written as a personal experience of fact two or three years before the fiction had even entered into his thoughts.

Visit to his father in prison.

'My father was waiting for me in the lodge, and we went up 'to his room (on the top story but one), and cried very much. And he told me, I remember, to take warning by the Marshal-'sea, and to observe that if a man had twenty pounds a-year, and 'spent nineteen pounds nineteen shillings and sixpence, he would 'be happy; but that a shilling spent the other way would make 'him wretched. I see the fire we sat before, now; with two bricks 'inside the rusted grate, one on each side, to prevent its burning 'too many coals. Some other debtor shared the room with him, 'who came in by-and-by; and as the dinner was a joint-stock 'repast, I was sent up to "Captain Porter" in the room over-'head, with Mr. Dickens's compliments, and I was his son, and 'could he, Captain P, lend me a knife and fork?

Prison inmates.

'Captain Porter lent the knife and fork, with his compliments 'in return. There was a very dirty lady in his little room; and two 'wan girls, his daughters, with shock heads of hair. I thought I 'should not have liked to borrow Captain Porter's comb. The

'Captain himself was in the last extremity of shabbiness; and if LONDON: 1822.
'I could draw at all, I would draw an accurate portrait of the
'old, old, brown great-coat he wore, with no other coat below it. Gower-street north.
'His whiskers were large. I saw his bed rolled up in a corner;
'and what plates, and dishes, and pots he had, on a shelf; and
'I knew (God knows how) that the two girls with the shock heads
'were Captain Porter's natural children, and that the dirty lady
'was not married to Captain P. My timid, wondering station
'on his threshold, was not occupied more than a couple of
'minutes, I dare say; but I came down again to the room below A child observer.
'with all this as surely in my knowledge, as the knife and fork
'were in my hand.'

How there was something agreeable and gipsy-like in the dinner after all, and how he took back the Captain's knife and fork early in the afternoon, and how he went home to comfort his mother with an account of his visit, David Copperfield has also accurately told. Then, at home, came many miserable daily struggles that seemed to last an immense time, yet did not perhaps cover many weeks. Almost everything by degrees was sold or pawned, little Charles being the principal agent in those sorrowful transactions. Such of the books as had been brought from Chatham, *Peregrine Pickle*, *Roderick Random*, *Tom Jones*, *Humphrey Clinker*, and all the rest, went first. They were carried off from the little chiffonier, Disposes of old friends.
which his father called the library, to a bookseller in the Hampstead-road, the same that David Copperfield describes as in the City-road; and the account of the sales, as they actually occurred and were told to me long before David was born, was reproduced word for word in his imaginary narrative. 'The keeper of this
'bookstall, who lived in a little house behind it, used to get tipsy
'every night, and to be violently scolded by his wife every morn-
'ing. More than once, when I went there early, I had audience
'of him in a turn-up bedstead, with a cut in his forehead or a
'black eye, bearing witness to his excesses over night (I am
'afraid he was quarrelsome in his drink); and he, with a shaking
'hand, endeavouring to find the needful shillings in one or other
'of the pockets of his clothes, which lay upon the floor, while
'his wife, with a baby in her arms and her shoes down at heel,

London: 1822. Gower-street north.

'never left off rating him. Sometimes he had lost his money, 'and then he would ask me to call again; but his wife had 'always got some (had taken his, I dare say, while he was drunk) 'and secretly completed the bargain on the stairs, as we went 'down together.'

The same pawnbroker's shop, too, which was so well known to David, became not less familiar to Charles; and a good deal of notice was here taken of him by the pawnbroker, or by his principal clerk who officiated behind the counter, and who, while making out the duplicate, liked of all things to hear the lad conjugate a Latin verb, and translate or decline his musa and dominus. Every thing to this accompaniment went gradually; until at last, even of the furniture of Gower-street number four, there was nothing left except a few chairs, a kitchen table, and some beds. Then they encamped, as it were, in the two parlours of the emptied house, and lived there night and day.

At the pawnbroker's.

All which is but the prelude to what remains to be described.

II.

HARD EXPERIENCES IN BOYHOOD.

1822—1824.

THE incidents to be told now would probably never have been known to me, or indeed any of the occurrences of his childhood and youth, but for the accident of a question which I put to him one day in the March or April of 1847.

I asked if he remembered ever having seen in his boyhood our friend the elder Mr. Dilke, his father's acquaintance and contemporary, who had been a clerk in the same office in Somerset-house to which Mr. John Dickens belonged. Yes, he said, he recollected seeing him at a house in Gerrard-street, where his uncle Barrow lodged during an illness, and Mr. Dilke had visited him. Never at any other time. Upon which I told him that some one else had been intended in the mention made to me, for that the reference implied not merely his being met accidentally,

but his having had some juvenile employment in a warehouse near the Strand; at which place Mr. Dilke, being with the elder Dickens one day, had noticed him, and received, in return for the gift of a half-crown, a very low bow. He was silent for several minutes; I felt that I had unintentionally touched a painful place in his memory; and to Mr. Dilke I never spoke of the subject again. It was not however then, but some weeks later, that Dickens made further allusion to my thus having struck unconsciously upon a time of which he never could lose the remembrance while he remembered anything, and the recollection of which, at intervals, haunted him and made him miserable, even to that hour.

LONDON: 1822. Gower-street north. Mr. Dilke's half-crown.

Very shortly afterwards, I learnt in all their detail the incidents that had been so painful to him, and what then was said to me or written respecting them revealed the story of his boyhood. The idea of *David Copperfield*, which was to take all the world into his confidence, had not at this time occurred to him; but what it had so startled me to know, his readers were afterwards told with only such change or addition as for the time might sufficiently disguise himself under cover of his hero. For, the poor little lad, with good ability and a most sensitive nature, turned at the age of ten into a 'labouring hind' in the service of 'Murdstone and Grinby,' and conscious already of what made it seem very strange to him that he could so easily have been thrown away at such an age, was indeed himself. His was the secret agony of soul at finding himself 'companion to Mick Walker and Mealy Potatoes,' and his the tears that mingled with the water in which he and they rinsed and washed out bottles. It had all been written, as fact, before he thought of any other use for it; and it was not until several months later, when the fancy of *David Copperfield*, itself suggested by what he had so written of his early troubles, began to take shape in his mind, that he abandoned his first intention of writing his own life. Those warehouse experiences fell then so aptly into the subject he had chosen, that he could not resist the temptation of immediately using them; and the manuscript recording them, which was but the first portion of what he had designed to write, was embodied in the substance of the eleventh and earlier chapters

Tells the story of his boyhood.

D. C. and C. D.

London: 1822. Gower-street north.

of his novel. What already had been sent to me, however, and proof-sheets of the novel interlined at the time, enable me now to separate the fact from the fiction; and to supply to the story of the author's childhood those passages, omitted from the book, which, apart from their illustration of the growth of his character, present to us a picture of tragical suffering, and of tender as well as humorous fancy, unsurpassed in even the wonders of his published writings.

James and George Lamert

The person indirectly responsible for the scenes to be described was the young relative James Lamert, the cousin by his aunt's marriage of whom I have made frequent mention, who got up the plays at Chatham, and after passing at Sandhurst had been living with the family in Bayham-street in the hope of obtaining a commission in the army. This did not come until long afterwards, when, in consideration of his father's services, he received it, and relinquished it then in favour of a younger brother; but he had meanwhile, before the family removed from Camden-town, ceased to live with them. The husband of a sister of his (of the same name as himself, being indeed his cousin, George Lamert), a man of some property, had recently embarked in an odd sort of commercial speculation; and had taken him into his office, and his house, to assist in it. I give now the fragment of the autobiography of Dickens.

At Hungerford-stairs.

'This speculation was a rivalry of "Warren's Blacking, 30, 'Strand,"—at that time very famous. One Jonathan Warren (the 'famous one was Robert), living at 30, Hungerford-stairs, or 'market, Strand (for I forget which it was called then), claimed 'to have been the original inventor or proprietor of the blacking 'recipe, and to have been deposed and ill-used by his renowned 'relation. At last he put himself in the way of selling his recipe, 'and his name, and his 30, Hungerford-stairs, Strand (30, Strand, 'very large, and the intermediate direction very small), for an 'annuity; and he set forth by his agents that a little capital 'would make a great business of it. The man of some property 'was found in George Lamert, the cousin and brother-in-law of 'James. He bought this right and title, and went into the 'blacking business and the blacking premises.

'—In an evil hour for me, as I often bitterly thought. Its chief manager, James Lamert, the relative who had lived with us in Bayham-street, seeing how I was employed from day to day, and knowing what our domestic circumstances then were, proposed that I should go into the blacking warehouse, to be as useful as I could, at a salary, I think, of six shillings a week. I am not clear whether it was six or seven. I am inclined to believe, from my uncertainty on this head, that it was six at first, and seven afterwards. At any rate the offer was accepted very willingly by my father and mother, and on a Monday morning I went down to the blacking warehouse to begin my business life.

LONDON: 1822-4. At Hungerford-stairs. First employment in life.

'It is wonderful to me how I could have been so easily cast away at such an age. It is wonderful to me, that, even after my descent into the poor little drudge I had been since we came to London, no one had compassion enough on me—a child of singular abilities, quick, eager, delicate, and soon hurt, bodily or mentally—to suggest that something might have been spared, as certainly it might have been, to place me at any common school. Our friends, I take it, were tired out. No one made any sign. My father and mother were quite satisfied. They could hardly have been more so, if I had been twenty years of age, distinguished at a grammar-school, and going to Cambridge.

'The blacking warehouse was the last house on the left-hand side of the way, at old Hungerford-stairs. It was a crazy, tumble-down old house, abutting of course on the river, and literally overrun with rats. Its wainscotted rooms, and its rotten floors and staircase, and the old grey rats swarming down in the cellars, and the sound of their squeaking and scuffling coming up the stairs at all times, and the dirt and decay of the place, rise up visibly before me, as if I were there again. The counting-house was on the first floor, looking over the coal-barges and the river. There was a recess in it, in which I was to sit and work. My work was to cover the pots of paste-blacking; first with a piece of oil-paper, and then with a piece of blue paper; to tie them round with a string; and then to clip the paper close and neat, all round, until it looked as smart as a pot of ointment from an apothecary's shop. When a certain number of grosses

The blacking warehouse. A poor little drudge.

London: 1822-4.

At Hungerford-stairs.

'of pots had attained this pitch of perfection, I was to paste on 'each a printed label; and then go on again with more pots. 'Two or three other boys were kept at similar duty down stairs 'on similar wages. One of them came up, in a ragged apron and 'a paper cap, on the first Monday morning, to show me the trick 'of using the string and tying the knot. His name was Bob

Bob Fagin.

'Fagin; and I took the liberty of using his name, long afterwards, 'in *Oliver Twist*.

'Our relative had kindly arranged to teach me something in 'the dinner-hour; from twelve to one, I think it was; every day. 'But an arrangement so incompatible with counting-house busi- 'ness soon died away, from no fault of his or mine; and for the 'same reason, my small work-table, and my grosses of pots, my 'papers, string, scizzors, paste-pot, and labels, by little and little, 'vanished out of the recess in the counting-house, and kept com- 'pany with the other small work-tables, grosses of pots, papers, 'string, scizzors, and paste-pots, downstairs. It was not long, 'before Bob Fagin and I, and another boy whose name was Paul 'Green, but who was currently believed to have been christened

'Poll' Green.

'Poll (a belief which I transferred, long afterwards again, to Mr. 'Sweedlepipe, in *Martin Chuzzlewit*), worked generally, side by 'side. Bob Fagin was an orphan, and lived with his brother-in- 'law, a waterman. Poll Green's father had the additional dis- 'tinction of being a fireman, and was employed at Drury-lane 'theatre; where another relation of Poll's, I think his little sister, 'did imps in the pantomimes.

'No words can express the secret agony of my soul as I sunk 'into this companionship; compared these every day associates 'with those of my happier childhood; and felt my early hopes of 'growing up to be a learned and distinguished man, crushed in

Crushed hopes and recollections.

'my breast. The deep remembrance of the sense I had of being 'utterly neglected and hopeless; of the shame I felt in my 'position; of the misery it was to my young heart to believe 'that, day by day, what I had learned, and thought, and delighted 'in, and raised my fancy and my emulation up by, was passing 'away from me, never to be brought back any more; cannot be 'written. My whole nature was so penetrated with the grief and

'humiliation of such considerations, that even now, famous and 'caressed and happy, I often forget in my dreams that I have a 'dear wife and children; even that I am a man; and wander 'desolately back to that time of my life. LONDON: 1822-4. At Hungerford-stairs.

'My mother and my brothers and sisters (excepting Fanny in 'the royal academy of music) were still encamped, with a young 'servant-girl from Chatham-workhouse, in the two parlours in the 'emptied house in Gower-street north. It was a long way to go 'and return within the dinner-hour, and, usually, I either carried 'my dinner with me, or went and bought it at some neighbouring 'shop. In the latter case, it was commonly a saveloy and a 'penny loaf; sometimes, a fourpenny plate of beef from a cook's 'shop; sometimes, a plate of bread and cheese, and a glass of 'beer, from a miserable old public-house over the way: the Swan, 'if I remember right, or the Swan and something else that I have 'forgotten. Once, I remember tucking my own bread (which I 'had brought from home in the morning) under my arm, wrapped 'up in a piece of paper like a book, and going into the best 'dining-room in Johnson's alamode beef-house in Clare-court, 'Drury-lane, and magnificently ordering a small plate of alamode 'beef to eat with it. What the waiter thought of such a strange 'little apparition, coming in all alone, I don't know; but I can 'see him now, staring at me as I ate my dinner, and bringing up 'the other waiter to look. I gave him a halfpenny, and I wish, 'now, that he hadn't taken it.' The family in Gower-street. Regaling alamode.

I lose here for a little while the fragment of direct narrative, but I perfectly recollect that he used to describe Saturday night as his great treat. It was a grand thing to walk home with six shillings in his pocket, and to look in at the shop windows, and think what it would buy. Hunt's roasted corn, as a British and patriotic substitute for coffee, was in great vogue just then; and the little fellow used to buy it, and roast it on the Sunday. There was a cheap periodical of selected pieces called the *Portfolio*, which he had also a great fancy for taking home with him. The new proposed 'deed,' meanwhile, had failed to propitiate his father's creditors; all hope of arrangement passed away; and the end was that his mother and her encampment in Gower-street Saturday night's journey home. Home broken up

London: 1822-4.

north broke up and went to live in the Marshalsea. I am able at this point to resume his own account.

At Hungerford-stairs.

'The key of the house was sent back to the landlord, who was 'very glad to get it; and I (small Cain that I was, except that I 'had never done harm to any one) was handed over as a lodger 'to a reduced old lady, long known to our family, in Little- 'college-street, Camden-town, who took children in to board, and 'had once done so at Brighton; and who, with a few alterations 'and embellishments, unconsciously began to sit for Mrs. Pipchin 'in *Dombey* when she took in me.

See *post*, Book vi. § 2.

'She had a little brother and sister under her care then; some- 'body's natural children, who were very irregularly paid for; and 'a widow's little son. The two boys and I slept in the same 'room. My own exclusive breakfast, of a penny cottage loaf and 'a pennyworth of milk, I provided for myself. I kept another 'small loaf, and a quarter of a pound of cheese, on a particular 'shelf of a particular cupboard; to make my supper on when I 'came back at night. They made a hole in the six or seven 'shillings, I know well; and I was out at the blacking-warehouse 'all day, and had to support myself upon that money all the

A cast-away.

'week. I suppose my lodging was paid for, by my father. I 'certainly did not pay it myself; and I certainly had no other 'assistance whatever (the making of my clothes, I think, ex- 'cepted), from Monday morning until Saturday night. No advice, 'no counsel, no encouragement, no consolation, no support, from 'any one that I can call to mind, so help me God.

Sundays in prison.

'Sundays, Fanny and I passed in the prison. I was at the 'academy in Tenterden-street, Hanover-square, at nine o'clock 'in the morning, to fetch her; and we walked back there together, 'at night.

'I was so young and childish, and so little qualified—how 'could I be otherwise?—to undertake the whole charge of my 'own existence, that, in going to Hungerford-stairs of a morning, 'I could not resist the stale pastry put out at half-price on trays 'at the confectioners' doors in Tottenham-court-road; and I often 'spent in that, the money I should have kept for my dinner. 'Then I went without my dinner, or bought a roll, or a slice of

'pudding. There were two pudding shops between which I was 'divided, according to my finances. One was in a court close to 'St. Martin's-church (at the back of the church) which is now 'removed altogether. The pudding at that shop was made with 'currants, and was rather a special pudding, but was dear: two 'penn'orth not being larger than a penn'orth of more ordinary 'pudding. A good shop for the latter was in the Strand, some- 'where near where the Lowther-arcade is now. It was a stout, 'hale pudding, heavy and flabby; with great raisins in it, stuck 'in whole, at great distances apart. It came up hot, at about 'noon every day; and many and many a day did I dine off it.

LONDON: 1822-4. At Hungerford-stairs. A choice of puddings.

'We had half-an-hour, I think, for tea. When I had money 'enough, I used to go to a coffee-shop, and have half-a-pint of 'coffee, and a slice of bread and butter. When I had no money, 'I took a turn in Covent-garden market, and stared at the pine- 'apples. The coffee-shops to which I most resorted were, one in 'Maiden-lane; one in a court (non-existent now) close to Hun- 'gerford-market; and one in St. Martin's-lane, of which I only 'recollect that it stood near the church, and that in the door 'there was an oval glass-plate, with COFFEE-ROOM painted on it, 'addressed towards the street. If I ever find myself in a very 'different kind of coffee-room now, but where there is such an 'inscription on glass, and read it backward on the wrong side 'MOOR-EEFFOC (as I often used to do then, in a dismal reverie), 'a shock goes through my blood.

Places of resort.

'I know I do not exaggerate, unconsciously and unintention- 'ally, the scantiness of my resources and the difficulties of my 'life. I know that if a shilling or so were given me by any 'one, I spent it in a dinner or a tea. I know that I worked, 'from morning to night, with common men and boys, a shabby 'child. I know that I tried, but ineffectually, not to anticipate 'my money, and to make it last the week through; by putting it 'away in a drawer I had in the counting-house, wrapped into six 'little parcels, each parcel containing the same amount, and 'labelled with a different day. I know that I have lounged 'about the streets, insufficiently and unsatisfactorily fed. I know 'that, but for the mercy of God, I might easily have been, for

What really was:

what easily might have been.

London: 1822-4.

'any care that was taken of me, a little robber or a little 'vagabond.

At Hungerford-stairs.

'But I held some station at the blacking warehouse too. Be-'sides that my relative at the counting-house did what a man so 'occupied, and dealing with a thing so anomalous, could, to treat 'me as one upon a different footing from the rest, I never said, 'to man or boy, how it was that I came to be there, or gave the 'least indication of being sorry that I was there. That I suffered 'in secret, and that I suffered exquisitely, no one ever knew 'but I. How much I suffered, it is, as I have said already, 'utterly beyond my power to tell. No man's imagination can 'overstep the reality. But I kept my own counsel, and I did 'my work. I knew from the first, that if I could not do my work 'as well as any of the rest, I could not hold myself above slight 'and contempt. I soon became at least as expeditious and as 'skilful with my hands, as either of the other boys. Though 'perfectly familiar with them, my conduct and manners were 'different enough from theirs to place a space between us. They, 'and the men, always spoke of me as "the young gentleman."

The foreman and the carman.

'A certain man (a soldier once) named Thomas, who was the 'foreman, and another named Harry, who was the carman and 'wore a red jacket, used to call me "Charles" sometimes, in 'speaking to me; but I think it was mostly when we were very 'confidential, and when I had made some efforts to entertain 'them over our work with the results of some of the old readings, 'which were fast perishing out of my mind. Poll Green uprose 'once, and rebelled against the "young gentleman" usage; but 'Bob Fagin settled him speedily.

'My rescue from this kind of existence I considered quite 'hopeless, and abandoned as such, altogether; though I am 'solemnly convinced that I never, for one hour, was reconciled

Remonstrance with his father.

'to it, or was otherwise than miserably unhappy. I felt keenly, 'however, the being so cut off from my parents, my brothers, and 'sisters; and, when my day's work was done, going home to such 'a miserable blank; and *that*, I thought, might be corrected. 'One Sunday night I remonstrated with my father on this head, 'so pathetically and with so many tears, that his kind nature gave

'way. He began to think that it was not quite right. I do 'believe he had never thought so before, or thought about it. It 'was the first remonstrance I had ever made about my lot, and 'perhaps it opened up a little more than I intended. A back-'attic was found for me at the house of an insolvent-court agent, 'who lived in Lant-street in the borough, where Bob Sawyer 'lodged many years afterwards. A bed and bedding were sent 'over for me, and made up on the floor. The little window had 'a pleasant prospect of a timber-yard; and when I took posses-'sion of my new abode, I thought it was a Paradise.'

LONDON: 1822-4. At Hungerford-stairs. A lodging in Lant-street.

There is here another blank, which it is however not difficult to supply from letters and recollections of my own. What was to him of course the great pleasure of his paradise of a lodging, was its bringing him again, though after a fashion sorry enough, within the circle of home. From this time he used to breakfast 'at 'home,' in other words in the Marshalsea; going to it as early as the gates were open, and for the most part much earlier. They had no want of bodily comforts there. His father's income, still going on, was amply sufficient for that; and in every respect indeed but elbow-room, I have heard him say, the family lived more comfortably in prison than they had done for a long time out of it. They were waited on still by the maid-of-all-work from ...yham-street, the orphan girl of the Chatham workhouse, from ...e sharp little worldly and also kindly ways he took his first ...ession of the Marchioness in the *Old Curiosity Shop*. She ...o had a lodging in the neighbourhood that she might be early on the scene of her duties; and when Charles met her, as he would do occasionally, in his lounging-place by London-bridge, he would occupy the time before the gates opened by telling her quite astonishing fictions about the wharves and the tower. 'But 'I hope I believed them myself,' he would say. Besides break-fast, he had supper also in the prison; and got to his lodging generally at nine o'clock. The gates closed always at ten.

Breakfast and supper in Marshalsea. C. D. and the Marchioness.

I must not omit what he told me of the landlord of this little lodging. He was a fat, good-natured, kind old gentleman. He was lame, and had a quiet old wife; and he had a very innocent grown-up son, who was lame too. They were all very kind to

Landlord's family in Lant-street.

London: 1822-4. At Hungerford-stairs.

the boy. He was taken with one of his old attacks of spasm one night, and the whole three of them were about his bed until morning. They were all dead when he told me this, but in another form they live still very pleasantly as the Garland family in the *Old Curiosity Shop.*

He had a similar illness one day in the warehouse, which I can describe in his own words. 'Bob Fagin was very good to me on 'the occasion of a bad attack of my old disorder. I suffered such 'excruciating pain that time, that they made a temporary bed of 'straw in my old recess in the counting-house, and I rolled about 'on the floor, and Bob filled empty blacking-bottles with hot 'water, and applied relays of them to my side, half the day. I 'got better, and quite easy towards evening; but Bob (who was 'much bigger and older than I) did not like the idea of my going 'home alone, and took me under his protection. I was too proud 'to let him know about the prison; and after making several 'efforts to get rid of him, to all of which Bob Fagin in his good-'ness was deaf, shook hands with him on the steps of a house 'near Southwark-bridge on the Surrey side, making believe that 'I lived there. As a finishing piece of reality in case of his 'looking back, I knocked at the door, I recollect, and asked, 'when the woman opened it, if that was Mr. Robert Fagin's 'house.'

Adventure with Bob Fagin.

The Saturday nights continued, as before, to be precio[illegible] him. 'My usual way home was over Blackfriars-bridge, 'down that turning in the Blackfriars-road which has Rowlan[illegible] 'Hill's chapel on one side, and the likeness of a golden dog 'licking a golden pot over a shop door on the other. There are 'a good many little low-browed old shops in that street, of a 'wretched kind; and some are unchanged now. I looked into 'one a few weeks ago, where I used to buy boot-laces on 'Saturday nights, and saw the corner where I once sat down on 'a stool to have a pair of ready-made half-boots fitted on. I have 'been seduced more than once, in that street on a Saturday night, 'by a show-van at a corner; and have gone in, with a very 'motley assemblage, to see the Fat-pig, the Wild-indian, and the 'Little-lady. There were two or three hat-manufactories there,

Home to Lant-street.

Saturday-night shows.

'then (I think they are there still); and among the things which, 'encountered anywhere, or under any circumstances, will instantly 'recall that time, is the smell of hat-making.' LONDON: 1822-4. At Hungerford-stairs.

His father's attempts to avoid going through the court having failed, all needful ceremonies had to be undertaken to obtain the benefit of the insolvent debtors' act; and in one of these little Charles had his part to play. One condition of the statute was that the wearing apparel and personal matters retained were not to exceed twenty pounds sterling in value. 'It was necessary, as 'a matter of form, that the clothes I wore should be seen by the 'official appraiser. I had a half-holiday to enable me to call 'upon him, at his own time, at a house somewhere beyond the 'Obelisk. I recollect his coming out to look at me with his 'mouth full, and a strong smell of beer upon him, and saying 'good-naturedly that "that would do," and "it was all right." Appraised officially 'Certainly the hardest creditor would not have been disposed '(even if he had been legally entitled) to avail himself of my poor 'white hat, little jacket, or corduroy trowsers. But I had a fat 'old silver watch in my pocket, which had been given me by my 'grandmother before the blacking days, and I had entertained 'my doubts as I went along whether that valuable possession 'might not bring me over the twenty pounds. So I was greatly 'relieved, and made him a bow of acknowledgment as I went out.'

[redacted]ll the want felt most by him was the companionship of boys [redacted]his own age. He had no such acquaintance. Sometimes, he [redacted]membered to have played on the coal-barges at dinner time, with Poll Green and Bob Fagin; but those were rare occasions. He generally strolled alone, about the back streets of the Adelphi; or explored the Adelphi arches. One of his favourite localities was a little public-house by the water-side called the Fox-under-the-hill, approached by an underground passage which we once missed in looking for it together; * and he had a vision which he Playing on the coal-barges.

* 'Will you permit me to say,' a correspondent writes (1871), 'that the 'house, shut up and almost ruinous, 'is still to be found at the bottom of 'a curious and most precipitous court, 'the entrance of which is just past 'Salisbury-street. It was once the 'approach, I think, to the half-penny 'boats. The house is now shut out 'from the water-side by the Embank-'ment.'

LONDON: 1822-4.

At Hungerford-stairs.

has mentioned in *Copperfield* of sitting eating something on a bench outside, one fine evening, and looking at some coal-heavers dancing before the house. 'I wonder what they thought of me,' says David. He had himself already said the same in his fragment of autobiography.

Another characteristic little incident he made afterwards one of David's experiences, but I am able to give it here without the disguises that adapt it to the fiction. 'I was such a little fellow, 'with my poor white hat, little jacket, and corduroy trowsers, that 'frequently, when I went into the bar of a strange public-house 'for a glass of ale or porter to wash down the saveloy and the 'loaf I had eaten in the street, they didn't like to give it me. 'I remember, one evening (I had been somewhere for my father, 'and was going back to the borough over Westminster-bridge),

Publican and wife at Cannon-row.

'that I went into a public-house in Parliament-street, which is 'still there though altered, at the corner of the short street 'leading into Cannon-row, and said to the landlord behind the 'bar, "What is your very best—the VERY *best*—ale, a glass?" 'For, the occasion was a festive one, for some reason: I forget 'why. It may have been my birthday, or somebody else's. '"Twopence," says he. "Then," says I, "just draw me a glass '"of that, if you please, with a good head to it." The landlo 'looked at me, in return, over the bar, from head to foot, w 'strange smile on his face; and instead of drawing the 'looked round the screen and said something to his wife, 'came out from behind it, with her work in her hand, and joi 'him in surveying me. Here we stand, all three, before me now, 'in my study in Devonshire-terrace. The landlord, in his shirt 'sleeves, leaning against the bar window-frame; his wife, looking 'over the little half-door; and I, in some confusion, looking up 'at them from outside the partition. They asked me a good 'many questions, as what my name was, how old I was, where 'I lived, how I was employed, &c. &c. To all of which, that I 'might commit nobody, I invented appropriate answers. They 'served me with the ale, though I suspect it was not the strongest 'on the premises; and the landlord's wife, opening the little half-'door and bending down, gave me a kiss that was half-admiring

'and half-compassionate, but all womanly and good, I am 'sure.' LONDON: 1822-4.

At Hungerford-stairs.

A later, and not less characteristic, occurrence of the true story of this time found also a place, three or four years after it was written, in his now famous fiction. It preceded but by a short term the discharge, from the Marshalsea, of the elder Dickens; to whom a rather considerable legacy from a relative had accrued not long before ('some hundreds' I understood), and had been paid into court during his imprisonment. The scene to be described arose on the occasion of a petition drawn up by him before he left, praying, not for the abolition of imprisonment for debt as David Copperfield relates, but for the less dignified but more accessible boon of a bounty to the prisoners to drink his majesty's health on his majesty's forthcoming birthday.

A Marshalsea incident in *Copperfield.*

'I mention the circumstance because it illustrates, to me, my 'early interest in observing people. When I went to the Marshal- 'sea of a night, I was always delighted to hear from my mother 'what she knew about the histories of the different debtors in the 'prison; and when I heard of this approaching ceremony, I was 'so anxious to see them all come in, one after another (though 'I knew the greater part of them already, to speak to, and they 'me), that I got leave of absence on purpose, and established 'myself in a corner, near the petition. It was stretched out, 'I recollect, on a great ironing-board, under the window, which 'in another part of the room made a bedstead at night. The 'internal regulations of the place, for cleanliness and order, and 'for the government of a common room in the ale-house; where 'hot water and some means of cooking, and a good fire, were 'provided for all who paid a very small subscription; were ex- 'cellently administered by a governing committee of debtors, of 'which my father was chairman for the time being. As many of 'the principal officers of this body as could be got into the small 'room without filling it up, supported him, in front of the petition; 'and my old friend Captain Porter (who had washed himself, to 'do honour to so solemn an occasion) stationed himself close to 'it, to read it to all who were unacquainted with its contents. 'The door was then thrown open, and they began to come in, in

The incident as it occurred.

Last experience in Marshalsea.

London: 1822-4.

At Hungerford-stairs.

'a long file; several waiting on the landing outside, while one 'entered, affixed his signature, and went out. To everybody in 'succession, Captain Porter said, "Would you like to hear it '"read?" If he weakly showed the least disposition to hear it, 'Captain Porter, in a loud sonorous voice, gave him every word 'of it. I remember a certain luscious roll he gave to such words 'as "'Majesty—gracious Majesty—your gracious Majesty's un-'"fortunate subjects—your Majesty's well-known munificence"—'as if the words were something real in his mouth, and delicious 'to taste: my poor father meanwhile listening with a little of an 'author's vanity, and contemplating (not severely) the spikes on 'the opposite wall. Whatever was comical in this scene, and 'whatever was pathetic, I sincerely believe I perceived in my 'corner, whether I demonstrated or not, quite as well as I should

Early interest in observing people.

'perceive it now. I made out my own little character and story 'for every man who put his name to the sheet of paper. I might 'be able to do that now, more truly: not more earnestly, or with 'a closer interest. Their different peculiarities of dress, of face, 'of gait, of manner, were written indelibly upon my memory. I 'would rather have seen it than the best play ever played; and 'I thought about it afterwards, over the pots of paste-blacking,

Materials for *Pickwick*:

'often and often. When I looked, with my mind's eye, into the 'Fleet-prison during Mr. Pickwick's incarceration, I wonder 'whether half-a-dozen men were wanting from the Marshalsea 'crowd that came filing in again, to the sound of Captain Porter's 'voice!'

When the family left the Marshalsea they all went to lodge with the lady in Little-college-street, a Mrs. Roylance, who has obtained unexpected immortality as Mrs. Pipchin; and they afterwards occupied a small house in Somers-town. But, before this time, Charles was present with some of them in Tenterden-street to see his sister Fanny receive one of the prizes given to the pupils of the royal academy of music. 'I could not bear to 'think of myself—beyond the reach of all such honourable 'emulation and success. The tears ran down my face. I felt 'as if my heart were rent. I prayed, when I went to bed that 'night, to be lifted out of the humiliation and neglect in which

'I was. I never had suffered so much before. There was no 'envy in this.' There was little need that he should say so. Extreme enjoyment in witnessing the exercise of her talents, the utmost pride in every success obtained by them, he manifested always to a degree otherwise quite unusual with him; and on the day of her funeral, which we passed together, I had most affecting proof of his tender and grateful memory of her in these childish days. A few more sentences, certainly not less touching than any that have gone before, will bring the story of them to its close. They stand here exactly as written by him.

LONDON: 1822-4.

At Hungerford-stairs.

His sister Fanny.

'I am not sure that it was before this time, or after it, that the 'blacking warehouse was removed to Chandos-street, Covent-'garden. It is no matter. Next to the shop at the corner of 'Bedford-street in Chandos-street, are two rather old-fashioned 'houses and shops adjoining one another. They were one then, 'or thrown into one, for the blacking business; and had been a 'butter shop. Opposite to them was, and is, a public-house, 'where I got my ale, under these new circumstances. The stones 'in the street may be smoothed by my small feet going across to 'it at dinner-time, and back again. The establishment was larger 'now, and we had one or two new boys. Bob Fagin and I had 'attained to great dexterity in tying up the pots. I forget how 'many we could do, in five minutes. We worked, for the light's 'sake, near the second window as you come from Bedford-street; 'and we were so brisk at it, that the people used to stop and look 'in. Sometimes there would be quite a little crowd there. I saw 'my father coming in at the door one day when we were very busy, 'and I wondered how he could bear it.

At Chandos-street, Covent-garden.

'Now, I generally had my dinner in the warehouse. Sometimes 'I brought it from home, so I was better off. I see myself coming 'across Russell-square from Somers-town, one morning, with some 'cold hotch-potch in a small basin tied up in a handkerchief. I 'had the same wanderings about the streets as I used to have, 'and was just as solitary and self-dependent as before; but I had 'not the same difficulty in merely living. I never however heard 'a word of being taken away, or of being otherwise than quite 'provided for.

Solitary street wanderings.

London: 1822-4.

At Chandos street, Covent-garden.

'At last, one day, my father, and the relative so often mentioned, 'quarrelled; quarrelled by letter, for I took the letter from my 'father to him which caused the explosion, but quarrelled very 'fiercely. It was about me. It may have had some backward 'reference, in part, for anything I know, to my employment at the 'window. All I am certain of is, that, soon after I had given 'him the letter, my cousin (he was a sort of cousin, by marriage) 'told me he was very much insulted about me; and that it was 'impossible to keep me, after that. I cried very much, partly 'because it was so sudden, and partly because in his anger he was 'violent about my father, though gentle to me. Thomas, the old 'soldier, comforted me, and said he was sure it was for the best. 'With a relief so strange that it was like oppression, I went 'home.

Father's quarrel w James Lamert.

'My mother set herself to accommodate the quarrel, and did so 'next day. She brought home a request for me to return next 'morning, and a high character of me, which I am very sure I 'deserved. My father said I should go back no more, and should 'go to school. I do not write resentfully or angrily: for I know 'how all these things have worked together to make me what I 'am: but I never afterwards forgot, I never shall forget, I never 'can forget, that my mother was warm for my being sent back.

Quits the warehouse.

'From that hour until this at which I write, no word of that 'part of my childhood which I have now gladly brought to a 'close, has passed my lips to any human being. I have no idea 'how long it lasted; whether for a year, or much more, or less. 'From that hour, until this, my father and my mother have been 'stricken dumb upon it. I have never heard the least allusion to 'it, however far off and remote, from either of them. I have never, 'until I now impart it to this paper, in any burst of confidence 'with any one, my own wife not excepted, raised the curtain I 'then dropped, thank God.

A silence of a quarter of a century.

'Until old Hungerford-market was pulled down, until old 'Hungerford-stairs were destroyed, and the very nature of the 'ground changed, I never had the courage to go back to the place 'where my servitude began. I never saw it. I could not endure 'to go near it. For many years, when I came near to Robert

Associations of servitude.

'Warren's in the Strand, I crossed over to the opposite side of the 'way, to avoid a certain smell of the cement they put upon the 'blacking-corks, which reminded me of what I was once. It was 'a very long time before I liked to go up Chandos-street. My 'old way home by the borough made me cry, after my eldest 'child could speak. LONDON: 1824.

'In my walks at night I have walked there often, since then, 'and by degrees I have come to write this. It does not seem a 'tithe of what I might have written, or of what I meant to write.' End of fragment.

The substance of some after-talk explanatory of points in the narrative, of which a note was made at the time, may be briefly added. He could hardly have been more than twelve years old when he left the place, and was still unusually small for his age; much smaller, though two years older, than his own eldest son was at the time of these confidences. His mother had been in the blacking warehouse many times; his father not more than once or twice. The rivalry of Robert Warren by Jonathan's representatives, the cousins George and James, was carried to wonderful extremes in the way of advertisement; and they were all very proud, he told me, of the cat scratching the boot, which was *their* house's device. The poets in the house's regular employ he remembered, too, and made his first study from one of them for the poet of Mrs. Jarley's wax-work. The whole enterprise, however, had the usual end of such things. The younger cousin tired of the concern; and a Mr. Wood, the proprietor who took James's share and became George's partner, sold it ultimately to Robert Warren. It continued to be his at the time Dickens and myself last spoke of it together, and he had made an excellent bargain of it. What became of the business.

III.

SCHOOL-DAYS AND START IN LIFE.

1824—1830.

IN what way those strange experiences of his boyhood affected him afterwards, the narrative of his life must show: but there

London: 1824.

were influences that made themselves felt even on his way to manhood.

Outcome of boyish trials.

What at once he brought out of the humiliation that had impressed him so deeply, though scarcely as yet quite consciously, was a natural dread of the hardships that might still be in store for him, sharpened by what he had gone through; and this, though in its effect for the present imperfectly understood, became by degrees a passionate resolve, even while he was yielding to circumstances, *not to be* what circumstances were conspiring to make him. All that was involved in what he had suffered and sunk into, could not have been known to him at the time; but it was plain enough later, as we see; and in conversation with me after the revelation was made, he used to find, at extreme points in his life, the explanation of himself in those early trials. He had derived great good from them, but not without alloy. The fixed and eager determination, the restless and resistless energy, which opened to him opportunities of escape from many mean environments, not by turning off from any path of duty, but by resolutely rising to such excellence or distinction as might be attainable in it, brought with it some disadvantage among many noble advantages. Of this he was himself aware, but not to the full extent. What it was that in society made him often uneasy, shrinking, and over-sensitive, he knew; but all the danger he ran in bearing down and over-mastering the feeling, he did not know. A too great confidence in himself, a sense that everything was possible to the will that would make it so, laid occasionally upon him self-imposed burdens greater than might be borne by any one with safety. In that direction there was in him, at such times, something even hard and aggressive; in his determinations a something that had almost the tone of fierceness; something in his nature that made his resolves insuperable, however hasty the opinions on which they had been formed. So rare were these manifestations, however, and so little did they prejudice a character as entirely open and generous as it was at all times ardent and impetuous, that only very infrequently, towards the close of the middle term of a friendship which lasted without the interruption of a day for more than three and thirty years, were they ever unfavourably

Effect in later years.

Disadvantage.

presented to me. But there they were; and when I have seen strangely present, at such chance intervals, a stern and even cold isolation of self-reliance side by side with a susceptivity almost feminine and the most eager craving for sympathy, it has seemed to me as though his habitual impulses for everything kind and gentle had sunk, for the time, under a sudden hard and inexorable sense of what fate had dealt to him in those early years. On more than one occasion indeed I had confirmation of this. 'I 'must entreat you,' he to wrote me in June 1862, 'to pause for 'an instant, and go back to what you know of my childish days, 'and to ask yourself whether it is natural that something of the 'character formed in me then, and lost under happier circum- 'stances, should have reappeared in the last five years. The 'never to be forgotten misery of that old time, bred a certain 'shrinking sensitiveness in a certain ill-clad ill-fed child, that I 'have found come back in the never to be forgotten misery of this 'later time.' LONDON: 1824-6.

One good there was, however, altogether without drawback, and which claims simply to be mentioned before my narrative is resumed. The story of his childish misery has itself sufficiently shown that he never throughout it lost his precious gift of animal spirits, or his native capacity for humorous enjoyment; and there were positive gains to him from what he underwent, which were also rich and lasting. To what in the outset of his difficulties and trials gave the decisive bent to his genius, I have already made special reference; and we are to observe, of what followed, that with the very poor and unprosperous, out of whose sufferings and strugglings, and the virtues as well as vices born of them, his not least splendid successes were wrought, his childish experiences had made him actually one. They were not his clients whose cause he pleaded with such pathos and humour, and on whose side he got the laughter and tears of all the world, but in some sort his very self. Nor was it a small part of this manifest advantage that he should have obtained his experience as a child and not as a man; that only the good part, the flower and fruit of it, was plucked by him; and that nothing of the evil part, none of the earth in which the seed was planted, remained to soil him. Advantages.

LONDON: 1824-6.

Next move in life.

His next move in life can also be given in his own language. 'There was a school in the Hampstead-road kept by Mr. Jones, 'a Welshman, to which my father dispatched me to ask for a card 'of terms. The boys were at dinner, and Mr. Jones was carving 'for them with a pair of holland sleeves on, when I acquitted 'myself of this commission. He came out, and gave me what I 'wanted; and hoped I should become a pupil. I did. At seven 'o'clock one morning, very soon afterwards, I went as day 'scholar to Mr. Jones's establishment, which was in Mornington-'place, and had its school-room sliced away by the Birmingham-'railway, when that change came about. The school-room 'however was not threatened by directors or civil engineers 'then, and there was a board over the door graced with the 'words WELLINGTON HOUSE ACADEMY.'

Wellington-house academy.

At Wellington-house academy he remained nearly two years, being a little over fourteen years of age when he quitted it. In his minor writings as well as in *Copperfield* will be found general allusions to it, and there is a paper among his pieces reprinted rom *Household Words* which purports specifically to describe it. To the account therein given of himself when he went to the chool, as advanced enough, so safely had his memory retained ts poor fragments of early schooling, to be put into *Virgil*, as getting sundry prizes, and as attaining to the eminent position of ts first boy, one of his two schoolfellows with whom I have had ommunication, makes objection; but both admit that the eneral features of the place are reproduced with wonderful ccuracy, and more especially in those points for which the school appears to have been much more notable than for anything connected with the scholarship of its pupils.

Described.

In the reprinted piece Dickens describes it as remarkable for white mice. He says that red-polls, linnets, and even canaries, were kept by the boys in desks, drawers, hat-boxes, and other strange refuges for birds; but that white mice were the favourite stock, and that the boys trained the mice much better than the master trained the boys. He recalled in particular one white mouse who lived in the cover of a Latin dictionary, ran up ladders, drew Roman chariots, shouldered muskets, turned wheels,

and even made a very creditable appearance on the stage as the Dog of Montargis, who might have achieved greater things but for having had the misfortune to mistake his way in a triumphal procession to the Capitol, when he fell into a deep inkstand, and was dyed black and drowned. LONDON: 1824-6. Wellington-house academy.

Nevertheless he mentions the school as one also of some celebrity in its neighbourhood, though nobody could have said why; and adds that among the boys the master was supposed to know nothing, and one of the ushers was supposed to know everything. 'We are still inclined to think the first named supposition perfectly correct. We went to look at the place only this last midsummer, and found that the railway had cut it up, root and branch. A great trunk line had swallowed the playground, sliced away the school-room, and pared off the corner of the house. Which, thus curtailed of its proportions, presented itself in a green stage of stucco, profile-wise towards the road, like a forlorn flat-iron without a handle, standing on end.' Revisited after five and twenty years.

One who knew him in those early days, Mr. Owen P. Thomas, thus writes to me (February, 1871). 'I had the honour of being Mr. Dickens's schoolfellow for about two years (1824—1826), both being day-scholars, at Mr. Jones's "Classical and Commercial Academy," as then inscribed in front of the house, and which was situated at the corner of Granby-street and the Hampstead-road. The house stands now in its original state, but the school and large playground behind disappeared on the formation of the London and North-western railway, which at this point runs in a slanting direction from Euston-square underneath the Hampstead-road. We were all companions and playmates when out of school, as well as fellow-students therein.' (Mr. Thomas includes in this remark the names of Henry Danson, now a physician in practice in London; of Daniel Tobin, whom I remember to have been frequently assisted by his old schoolfellow in later years; and of Richard Bray.) 'You will find a graphic sketch of the school by Mr. Dickens himself in *Household Words* of 11th October, 1851. The article is entitled Our School. The names of course are feigned; but, allowing for slight colouring, the persons and incidents described are all true Letter from a schoolfellow. Sketch by Dickens.

LONDON: 1824-6.

Wellington-house academy.

'to life, and easily recognizable by any one who attended the 'school at the time. The Latin master was Mr. Manville, or 'Mandeville, who for many years was well known at the library 'of the British-museum. The academy, after the railroad over-'threw it, was removed to another house in the neighbourhood, 'but Mr. Jones and two at least of his assistant masters have 'long ago departed this life.'

One of the latter was the usher believed to know everything, who was writing master, mathematical master, English master, divided the little boys with the Latin master, made out the bills, mended the pens, and always called at parents' house to enquire after sick boys, because he had gentlemanly manners. This picture, my correspondent recognized; as well as those of the fat little dancing master who taught them hornpipes, of the Latin master who stuffed his ears with onions for his deafness, of the gruff serving-man who nursed the boys in scarlet fever, and of the principal himself who was always ruling ciphering books with a bloated mahogany ruler, smiting the palms of offenders with the same diabolical instrument, or viciously drawing a pair of pantaloons tight with one of his large hands and caning the wearer with the other.

Dickens's recollections.

'My recollection of Dickens whilst at school,' Mr. Thomas continues, 'is that of a healthy looking boy, small but well-built, 'with a more than usual flow of spirits, inducing to harmless fun, 'seldom or ever I think to mischief, to which so many lads at 'that age are prone. I cannot recall anything that then indicated 'he would hereafter become a literary celebrity; but perhaps he 'was too young then. He usually held his head more erect than 'lads ordinarily do, and there was a general smartness about 'him. His week-day dress of jacket and trousers, I can clearly 'remember, was what is called pepper-and-salt; and instead of 'the frill that most boys of his age wore then, he had a turn-down 'collar, so that he looked less youthful in consequence. He 'invented what we termed a "lingo," produced by the addition 'of a few letters of the same sound to every word; and it was 'our ambition, walking and talking thus along the street, to be 'considered foreigners. As an alternate amusement the present

School-fellow's recollections.

'writer well remembers extemporising tales of some sort, and 'reciting them offhand, with Dickens and Danson or Tobin 'walking on either side of him. I enclose you a copy of a note 'I received from him when he was between thirteen and fourteen 'years of age, perhaps one of the earliest productions of his pen. 'The Leg referred to was the Legend of something, a pamphlet 'romance I had lent him; the Clavis was of course the Latin 'school book so named.' LONDON: 1824-6. Wellington-house academy.

There is some underlying whim or fun in the 'Leg' allusions which Mr. Thomas appears to have overlooked, and certainly fails to explain: but the note, which is given in fac-simile overleaf, may be left to speak for itself; and in the signature the reader will be amused to see the first faint beginning of a flourish afterwards famous.

'After a lapse of years,' Mr. Thomas continues, 'I recognized 'the celebrated writer as the individual I had known so well as 'a boy, from having preserved this note; and upon Mr. Dickens 'visiting Reading in December 1854 to give one of his earliest 'readings for the benefit of the literary institute, of which he had 'become president on Mr. Justice Talfourd's death, I took the 'opportunity of showing it to him, when he was much diverted 'therewith. On the same occasion we conversed about mutual 'schoolfellows, and among others Daniel Tobin was referred to, 'whom I remembered to have been Dickens's *most* intimate 'companion in the school days (1824 to 1826). His reply was 'that Tobin either was then, or had previously been, assisting 'him in the capacity of amanuensis; but there is a subsequent 'mystery about Tobin, in connection with his friend and patron 'which I have never been able to comprehend; for I understood 'shortly afterwards that there was entire separation between them 'and it must have been an offence of some gravity to have sun 'dered an acquaintance formed in early youth, and which had 'endured, greatly to Tobin's advantage, so long. He resided in 'our schooldays in one of the now old and grimy-looking stone 'fronted houses in George-street, Euston-road, a few doors from 'the Orange-tree tavern. It is the opinion of the other school 'fellow with whom we were intimate, Doctor Danson, that upon A meeting after thirty years. Daniel Tobin.

London 1824-6.

Wellington-house academy.

Schoolboy's letter.

(No date, but was written in latter part of 1825.)

Autograph in boyhood.

Tom/

I am quite ashamed I have not returned your Leg but you shall have it by Harry to morrow if you would like to purchase my Clavis you shall have it at a very reduced price Cheaper in comparison than a Leg.

Yours &c

C Dickens.

P.S. I suppose all this time you have had a wooden Leg. I have weighed yours every Saturday Night

'leaving school Mr. Dickens and Tobin entered the same 'solicitor's office, and this he thinks was either in or near Lin- 'coln's-inn-fields.' LONDON: 1824-6. Wellington-house academy.

The offence of Tobin went no deeper than the having at last worn out even Dickens's patience and kindness. His applications for relief were so incessantly repeated, that to cut him and them adrift altogether was the only way of escape from what had become an intolerable nuisance. To Mr. Thomas's letter the reader will thank me for adding one not less interesting with which Dr. Henry Danson has favoured me. We have here, with the same fun and animal spirits, a little of the proneness to mischief which his other school-fellow says he was free from; but the mischief is all of the harmless kind, and might perhaps have been better described as but part of an irrepressible vivacity. See *post*, 50, 153.

'My impression is that I was a schoolfellow of Dickens for 'nearly two years: he left before me, I think at about 15 years 'of age. Mr. Jones's school, called the Wellington-academy, was 'in the Hampstead-road, at the north-east corner of Granby- 'street. The school-house was afterwards removed for the London 'and North-western railway. It was considered at the time a 'very superior sort of school, one of the best indeed in that part 'of London; but it was most shamefully mismanaged, and the 'boys made but very little progress. The proprietor, Mr. Jones, 'was a Welshman; a most ignorant fellow, and a mere tyrant; 'whose chief employment was to scourge the boys. Dickens 'has given a very lively account of this place in his paper entitled 'Our School, but it is very mythical in many respects, and more 'especially in the compliment he pays in it to himself. I do 'not remember that Dickens distinguished himself in any way, 'or carried off any prizes. My belief is that he did not learn 'Greek or Latin there, and you will remember there is no allusion 'to the classics in any of his writings. He was a handsome, 'curly-headed lad, full of animation and animal spirits, and pro- 'bably was connected with every mischievous prank in the school. 'I do not think he came in for any of Mr. Jones's scourging pro- 'pensity: in fact, together with myself, he was only a day-pupil, 'and with these there was a wholesome fear of tales being carried Letter from another school-fellow. Chief employment of chief master. Dickens in school.

London: 1824-6.

Wellington-house academy.

'home to the parents. His personal appearance at that time is 'vividly brought home to me in the portrait of him taken a few 'years later by Mr. Lawrence. He resided with his friends, in 'a very small house in a street leading out of Seymour-street, 'north of Mr. Judkin's chapel.

'Depend on it he was quite a self-made man, and his wonderful 'knowledge and command of the English language must have 'been acquired by long and patient study after leaving his last 'school.

Associates and pursuits.

'I have no recollection of the boy you name. His chief 'associates were, I think, Tobin, Mr. Thomas, Bray, and myself. 'The first-named was his chief ally, and his acquaintance with 'him appears to have continued many years afterwards. At 'about that time Penny and Saturday magazines were published 'weekly, and were greedily read by us.* We kept bees, white 'mice, and other living things clandestinely in our desks; and 'the mechanical arts were a good deal cultivated, in the shape 'of coach-building, and making pumps and boats, the motive 'power of which was the white mice.

Writing and acting.

'I think at that time Dickens took to writing small tales, and 'we had a sort of club for lending and circulating them. Dickens 'was also very strong in using a sort of lingo, which made us 'quite unintelligible to bystanders. We were very strong, too, 'in theatricals. We mounted small theatres, and got up very 'gorgeous scenery to illustrate the *Miller and his Men* and *Cherry 'and Fair Star*. I remember the present Mr. Beverley, the 'scene painter, assisted us in this. Dickens was always a leader 'at these plays, which were occasionally presented with much 'solemnity before an audience of boys, and in the presence of 'the ushers. My brother, assisted by Dickens, got up the *Miller*

Master Beverley, scene-painting.

* These were not the magazines afterwards so well known as the Penny and Saturday, but weekly periodicals of some years' earlier date resembling them in form. One of them was presumably of a less wholesome and instructive character, for in his later years Dickens wrote to me: 'I used 'when I was at school, to take in the '*Terrific Register*, making myself unspeakably miserable, and frightening 'my very wits out of my head, for the 'small charge of a penny weekly; 'which, considering that there was an 'illustration to every number, in which 'there was always a pool of blood, 'and at least one body, was cheap.'

'*and his Men*, in a very gorgeous form. Master Beverley con- LONDON: 1824-6.
'structed the mill for us in such a way that it could tumble to
'pieces with the assistance of crackers. At one representation Wellington-house academy.
'the fireworks in the last scene, ending with the destruction of
'the mill, were so very real that the police interfered, and knocked
'violently at the doors. Dickens's after taste for theatricals might
'have had its origin in these small affairs.

'I quite remember Dickens on one occasion heading us in Street acting.
'Drummond-street in pretending to be poor boys, and asking the
'passers-by for charity—especially old ladies; one of whom told
'us she "had no money for beggar boys." On these adventures,
'when the old ladies were quite staggered by the impudence of
'the demand, Dickens would explode with laughter and take to
'his heels.

'I met him one Sunday morning shortly after he left the school, At church
'and we very piously attended the morning service at Seymour-
'street chapel. I am sorry to say Master Dickens did not attend
'in the slightest degree to the service, but incited me to laughter
'by declaring his dinner was ready and the potatoes would be
'spoiled, and in fact behaved in such a manner that it was lucky
'for us we were not ejected from the chapel.

'I heard of him some time after from Tobin, whom I met
'carrying a foaming pot of London particular in Lincoln's-inn-
'fields, and I then understood that Dickens was in the same or
'some neighbouring office.

'Many years elapsed after this before I became aware, from Schoolfellows after 40 years.
'accidentally reading Our School, that the brilliant and now
'famous Dickens was my old schoolfellow. I didn't like to
'intrude myself upon him; and it was not until three or four
'years ago, when he presided at the University-college dinner
'at Willis's-rooms, and made a most brilliant and effective speech,
'that I sent him a congratulatory note reminding him of our
'former fellowship. To this he sent me a kind note in reply,
'and which I value very much. I send you copies of these.'*

* The reader will probably think them worth subjoining. Dr. Danson wrote:—'*April*, 1864. DEAR SIR, 'On the recent occasion of the U.C.H. 'dinner, you would probably have 'been amused and somewhat sur-

London: 1826-7.

From Dickens himself I never heard much allusion to the school thus described: but I knew, that, besides being the subject dealt with in *Household Words*, it had supplied some of the lighter traits of Salem-house for *Copperfield;* and that to the fact of one of its tutors being afterwards engaged to teach a boy of Macready's, our common friend, Dickens used to point for one of the illustrations of his favourite theory as to the smallness of the world, and how things and persons apparently the most unlikely to meet were continually knocking up against each other. The employment as his amanuensis of his schoolfellow Tobin dates as early as his Doctors'-commons days, but both my correspondents are mistaken in the impression they appear to have

Smallness of the world.

Daniel Tobin and Dickens.

'prised to learn that one of those 'whom you addressed had often 'accompanied you over that "field 'of forty steps" to which you so aptly 'and amusingly alluded. It is now 'some years since I was accidentally 'reading a paper written by your-'self in the *Household Words*, when 'I was first impressed with the idea 'that the writer described scenes 'and persons with which I was once 'familiar, and that he must necessarily 'be the veritable Charles Dickens of '"our school"—the School of Jones! 'I did not then, however, like to in-'trude myself upon you, for I could 'hardly hope that you would retain 'any recollection of myself; indeed, 'it was only barely possible you should 'do so, however vividly *I* might recall 'you in many scenes of fun and frolic 'of my school days. I happened to 'be present at the dinner of Tuesday 'last (being interested as an old stu-'dent in the school of the hospital), 'and was seated very near you; I 'was tempted during the evening to 'introduce myself to you, but feared 'least an explanation such as this in a 'public room might attract attention 'and be disagreeable to yourself. A 'man who has attained a position and 'celebrity such as yours will probably 'have many early associates and ac-'quaintances claiming his notice. I 'beg of you to believe that such is not 'my object, but that having so re-'cently met you I feel myself unable 'to repress the desire to assure you 'that no one in the room could ap-'preciate the fame and rank you have 'so fairly won, or could wish you 'more sincerely long life and happi-'ness to enjoy them, than, Dear 'Sir, your old school-fellow, HENRY 'DANSON.' To this Dickens replied: 'GAD'S HILL PLACE, *Thursday, 5th 'May*, 1864. DEAR SIR, I should 'have assured you before now that 'the receipt of your letter gave me 'great pleasure, had I not been too 'much occupied to have leisure for 'correspondence. I perfectly recol-'lect your name as that of an old 'school-fellow, and distinctly remem-'ber your appearance and dress as a 'boy, and believe you had a brother 'who was unfortunately drowned in 'the Serpentine. If you had made 'yourself personally known to me at 'the dinner, I should have been well 'pleased; though in that case I should 'have lost your modest and manly 'letter. Faithfully yours, CHARLES 'DICKENS.'

Dickens and Dr. Danson.

received that Tobin had been previously his fellow-clerk in the same attorney's office. I had thought him more likely to have been accompanied there by another of his boyish acquaintances who became afterwards a solicitor, Mr. Mitton, not recollected by either of my correspondents in connection with the school, but whom I frequently met with him in later years, and for whom he had the regard arising out of such early associations. In this however I have since discovered my own mistake: the truth being that it was this gentleman's connection, not with the Wellington-academy, but with a school kept by Mr. Dawson in Hunter-street, Brunswick-square, where the brothers of Dickens were subsequently placed, which led to their early knowledge of each other. I fancy that they were together also, for a short time, at Mr. Molloy's in New-square, Lincoln's-inn; but, whether or not this was so, Dickens certainly had not quitted school many months before his father had made sufficient interest with an attorney of Gray's-inn, Mr. Edward Blackmore, to obtain him regular employment in his office. In this capacity of clerk, our only trustworthy glimpse of him we owe to the last-named gentleman, who has described briefly, and I do not doubt authentically, the services so rendered by him to the law. It cannot be said that they were noteworthy, though it might be difficult to find a more distinguished person who has borne the title, unless we make exception for the very father of literature himself, whom Chaucer, with amusing illustration of the way in which words change their meanings, calls 'that conceited clerke Homère.'

LONDON: 1827-8.

An early friend.

In an attorney's office.

'I was well acquainted,' writes Mr. Edward Blackmore of Alresford, 'with his parents, and, being then in practice in Gray's-'inn, they asked me if I could find employment for him. He 'was a bright, clever-looking youth, and I took him as a clerk. 'He came to me in May 1827, and left in November 1828; and 'I have now an account-book which he used to keep of petty dis-'bursements in the office, in which he charged himself with the 'modest salary first of thirteen shillings and sixpence, and after-'wards of fifteen shillings a-week. Several incidents took place 'in the office of which he must have been a keen observer, as I 'recognized some of them in his *Pickwick* and *Nickleby*, and

Described by his employer.

At Mr. Blackmore's.

London: 1827-8.

'I am much mistaken if some of his characters had not their 'originals in persons I well remember. His taste for theatricals 'was much promoted by a fellow-clerk named Potter, since dead, 'with whom he chiefly associated. They took every opportunity, 'then unknown to me, of going together to a minor theatre, where '(I afterwards heard) they not unfrequently engaged in parts. 'After he left me I saw him at times in the lord chancellor's court, 'taking notes of cases as a reporter. I then lost sight of him 'until his *Pickwick* made its appearance.' This letter indicates the position he held at Mr. Blackmore's; and we have but to turn to the passage in *Pickwick* which describes the several grades of attorney's-clerk, to understand it more clearly. He was very far below the articled clerk, who has paid a premium and is attorney in perspective. He was not so high as the salaried clerk, with nearly the whole of his weekly thirty-shillings spent on his personal pleasures. He was not even on a level with the middle-aged copying clerk, always needy and uniformly shabby. He was simply among, however his own nature may have lifted him above, the 'office-lads in their first surtouts, who feel a befitting 'contempt for boys at day-schools, club as they go home at night 'for saveloys and porter, and think there's nothing like life.' Thus far, not more or less, had he now reached. He was one of the office-lads, and probably in his first surtout.

Minor-theatre tastes.

His grade of clerkship.

Self-teaching.

But, even thus, the process of education went on, defying what seemed to interrupt it; and in the amount of his present equipment for his needs of life, what he brought from the Wellington-house academy can have borne but the smallest proportion to his acquirement at Mr. Blackmore's. Yet to seek to identify, without help from himself, any passages in his books with those boyish law-experiences, would be idle and hopeless enough. In the earliest of his writings, and down to the very latest, he worked exhaustively the field which is opened by an attorney's office to a student of life and manners; but we have not now to deal with his numerous varieties of the *genus* clerk drawn thus for the amusement of others, but with the acquisitions which at present he was storing up for himself from the opportunities such offices opened to him. Nor would it be possible to have better illustra-

tive comment on all these years, than is furnished by his father's reply to a friend it was now hoped to interest on his behalf, which more than once I have heard him whimsically but good-humouredly imitate. 'Pray, Mr. Dickens, where was your son 'educated?' 'Why, indeed, Sir—ha! ha!—he may be said 'to have educated himself!' Of the two kinds of education which Gibbon says that all men who rise above the common level receive; the first, that of his teachers, and the second, more personal and more important, *his own;* he had the advantage only of the last. It nevertheless sufficed for him.

LONDON: 1821-30.

The father on the son's education.

Very nearly another eighteen months were now to be spent mainly in practical preparation for what he was, at this time, led finally to choose as an employment from which a fair income was certain with such talents as he possessed; his father already having taken to it, in these latter years, in aid of the family resources. In his father's house, which was at Hampstead through the first portion of the Mornington-street school-time, then in the house out of Seymour-street mentioned by Mr. Danson, and afterwards, upon the elder Dickens going into the gallery as a reporter for the *Morning Herald*, in Bentinck-street, Manchester-square, Charles had continued to live; and, influenced doubtless by the example before him, he took sudden determination to qualify himself thoroughly for what his father was lately become, a newspaper parliamentary reporter. He set resolutely therefore to the study of short-hand; and, for the additional help of such general information about books as a fairly educated youth might be expected to have, as well as to satisfy some higher personal cravings, he became an assiduous attendant in the British-museum reading-room. He would frequently refer to these days as decidedly the usefullest to himself he had ever passed; and judging from the results they must have been so. No man who knew him in later years, and talked to him familiarly of books and things, would have suspected his education in boyhood, almost entirely self-acquired as it was, to have been so rambling or hap-hazard as I have here described it. The secret consisted in this, that, whatever for the time he had to do, he lifted himself, there and then, to the level of; and at no time disregarded the rules that guided

Another employment in prospect.

Studying short-hand.

In British-museum reading-room.

London: 1828-30.

the hero of his novel. 'Whatever I have tried to do in life, I 'have tried with all my heart to do well. What I have devoted 'myself to, I have devoted myself to completely. Never to put 'one hand to anything on which I could throw my whole self, 'and never to affect depreciation of my work, whatever it was, I 'find now to have been my golden rules.'

Of the difficulties that beset his short-hand studies, as well as of what first turned his mind to them, he has told also something in *Copperfield*. He had heard that many men distinguished in various pursuits had begun life by reporting the debates in parliament, and he was not deterred by a friend's warning that the mere mechanical accomplishment for excellence in it might take a few years to master thoroughly: 'a perfect and entire command 'of the mystery of short-hand writing and reading being about 'equal in difficulty to the mastery of six languages.' Undaunted, he plunged into it, self-teaching in this as in graver things; and, having bought Mr. Gurney's half-guinea book, worked steadily his way through its distractions. 'The changes that were rung upon 'dots, which in such a position meant such a thing, and in such 'another position something else entirely different; the wonderful 'vagaries that were played by circles; the unaccountable conse-'quences that resulted from marks like flies' legs; the tremendous 'effects of a curve in a wrong place; not only troubled my waking 'hours, but reappeared before me in my sleep. When I had 'groped my way, blindly, through these difficulties, and had mas-'tered the alphabet, there then appeared a procession of new 'horrors, called arbitrary characters; the most despotic characters 'I have ever known; who insisted, for instance, that a thing like 'the beginning of a cobweb meant expectation, and that a pen-'and-ink sky-rocket stood for disadvantageous. When I had 'fixed these wretches in my mind, I found that they had driven 'everything else out of it; then, beginning again, I forgot them; 'while I was picking them up, I dropped the other fragments of 'the system; in short, it was almost heart-breaking.'

Preparing for the gallery.

Own experience in *Copperfield*.

What it was that made it not quite heart-breaking to the hero of the fiction, its readers know; and something of the same kind was now to enter into the actual experience of its writer. First

Further likeness between fiction and fact.

let me say, however, that after subduing to his wants in marvellously quick time this unruly and unaccommodating servant of stenography, what he most desired was still not open to him. LONDON: 1828-30.

'There never *was* such a short-hand writer,' has been often said to me by Mr. Beard, the friend he first made in that line when he entered the gallery, and with whom to the close of his life he maintained the friendliest intercourse. But there was no opening for him in the gallery yet. He had to pass nearly two years as a reporter for one of the offices in Doctors'-commons, having made attempt even in the direction of the stage to escape such drudgery, before he became a sharer in parliamentary toils and triumphs; and what sustained his young hero through something of the same sort of trial, was also his own support. He, too, had his Dora, at apparently the same hopeless elevation; striven for as the one only thing to be attained, and even more unattainable, for neither did he succeed nor happily did she die; but the one idol, like the other, supplying a motive to exertion for the time, and otherwise opening out to the idolater, both in fact and fiction, a highly unsubstantial, happy, foolish time. I used to laugh and tell him I had no belief in any but the book Dora, until the incident of a sudden reappearance of the real one in his life, nearly six years after *Copperfield* was written, convinced me there had been a more actual foundation for those chapters of his book than I was ready to suppose. Still I would hardly admit it; and, that the matter could possibly affect him then, persisted in a stout refusal to believe. His reply (1855) throws a little light on this juvenile part of his career, and I therefore venture to preserve it.

Reporting in Doctors'-commons.

A Dora in 1829.

The Dora of 1829 appears in 1855.

'I don't quite apprehend what you mean by my over-rating the 'strength of the feeling of five-and-twenty years ago. If you 'mean of my own feeling, and will only think what the desperate 'intensity of my nature is, and that this began when I was 'Charley's age; that it excluded every other idea from my mind 'for four years, at a time of life when four years are equal to four 'times four; and that I went at it with a determination to overcome all the difficulties, which fairly lifted me up into that news-'paper life, and floated me away over a hundred men's heads:

An incentive to exertion.

London: 1828-30.

'then you are wrong, because nothing can exaggerate that. I 'have positively stood amazed at myself ever since!—And so I 'suffered, and so worked, and so beat and hammered away at 'the maddest romances that ever got into any boy's head and 'stayed there, that to see the mere cause of it all, now, loosens 'my hold upon myself. Without for a moment sincerely be- 'lieving that it would have been better if we had never got 'separated, I cannot see the occasion of so much emotion as I 'should see any one else. No one can imagine in the most 'distant degree what pain the recollection gave me in *Copperfield.* 'And, just as I can never open that book as I open any other 'book, I cannot see the face (even at four-and-forty), or hear the 'voice, without going wandering away over the ashes of all that 'youth and hope in the wildest manner.' More and more plainly seen, however, in the light of four-and-forty, the romance glided visibly away, its work being fairly done; and, at the close of the month following that in which this letter was written, during which he had very quietly made a formal call with his wife at his youthful Dora's house, and contemplated with a calm equanimity, in the hall, her stuffed favourite Jip, he began the fiction in which there was a Flora to set against its predecessor's Dora, both derived from the same original. The fancy had a comic humour in it he found it impossible to resist, but it was kindly and pleasant to the last;* and if the later picture showed him plenty to

Youth's romance.

The romance fading.

Dora of *Copperfield* changed into Flora of *Little Dorrit.*

* 'I take other fanciful allusions to the lady from two of his occasional writings. The first from his visit to the city churches (written during the Dombey time, when he had to select a church for the marriage of Florence): 'Its drowsy cadence soon lulls the 'three old women asleep, and the un- 'married tradesman sits looking out at 'window, and the married tradesman 'sits looking at his wife's bonnet, and 'the lovers sit looking at one another, 'so superlatively happy, that I mind 'when I, turned of eighteen, went 'with my Angelica to a city church 'on account of a shower (by this 'special coincidence that it was in 'Huggin-lane), and when I said to my 'Angelica, "Let the blessed event, '"Angelica, occur at no altar but '"this!" and when my Angelica 'consented that it should occur at no 'other—which it certainly never did, 'for it never occurred anywhere. 'And O, Angelica, what has become 'of you, this present Sunday morn- 'ing when I can't attend to the 'sermon; and, more difficult question 'than that, what has become of Me 'as I was when I sat by your side!' The second, from his pleasant paper on birthdays:—'I gave a party on the 'occasion. She was there. It is un- 'necessary to name Her, more par-

Fact and fiction.

laugh at in this retrospect of his youth, there was nothing he thought of more tenderly than the earlier, as long as he was conscious of anything. LONDON: 1828-30.

IV.

NEWSPAPER REPORTING AND WRITING.

1831—1835.

DICKENS was nineteen years old when at last he entered the gallery. His father, with whom he still lived in Bentinck-street, had already, as we have seen, joined the gallery as a reporter for one of the morning papers, and was now in the more comfortable circumstances derived from the addition to his official pension which this praiseworthy labour ensured; but his own engagement on the *Chronicle* dates somewhat later. His first parliamentary service was given to the *True Sun*, a journal which had on its editorial staff some dear friends of mine, through whom I became myself a contributor to it, and afterwards, in common with all concerned, whether in its writing, reporting, printing, or publishing, a sharer in its difficulties. The most formidable of these arrived one day in a general strike of the reporters; and I well remember noticing at this dread time, on the staircase of the magnificent mansion we were lodged in, a young man of my own age whose keen animation of look would have arrested attention anywhere, and whose name, upon enquiry, I then for the first time heard. It was coupled with the fact which gave it interest even then, that 'young Dickens' had been spokesman for the recalcitrant reporters, and conducted their case triumphantly. He was afterwards during two sessions engaged for the *Mirror of Parliament*, which one of his uncles by the mother's side originated

LONDON: 1831-2.

Reporting for the *True Sun*.

Dickens first seen by me.

See Mr. Collier's Diary, *post*, Book XI. § 3.

'ticularly; She was older than I, and had pervaded every chink and crevice of my mind for three or four years. I had held volumes of Imaginary Conversations with her mother on the subject of our union, and I had written letters more in number than Horace Walpole's, to that discreet woman, soliciting her daughter's hand in marriage. I had never had the remotest intention of sending any of those letters; but to write them, and after a few days tear them up, had been a sublime occupation.'

London: 1832-4.

and conducted; and finally, in his twenty-third year, he became a reporter for the *Morning Chronicle*.

His attempt to get upon the stage dates immediately before these newspaper engagements. His Doctors'-commons reportership was a living so wearily uncertain, that a possibility of the other calling had occurred to him in quite a business-like way. He went to theatres almost every night for a long time; studied and practised himself in parts; was so much attracted by the 'At Homes' of the elder Mathews, that he resolved to make his first plunge in a similar direction; and finally wrote to make offer of himself to Covent Garden. 'I wrote to Bartley, who was 'stage-manager, and told him how young I was, and exactly what 'I thought I could do; and that I believed I had a strong per- 'ception of character and oddity, and a natural power of repro- 'ducing in my own person what I observed in others. This was 'at the time when I was at Doctors'-commons as a shorthand 'writer for the proctors. And I recollect I wrote the letter from 'a little office I had there, where the answer came also. There 'must have been something in my letter that struck the authori- 'ties, for Bartley wrote to me almost immediately to say that they 'were busy getting up the Hunchback (so they were), but that 'they would communicate with me again, in a fortnight. Punctual 'to the time another letter came, with an appointment to do 'anything of Mathews's I pleased, before him and Charles Kemble, 'on a certain day at the theatre. My sister Fanny was in the 'secret, and was to go with me to play the songs. I was laid up 'when the day came, with a terrible bad cold and an inflamma- 'tion of the face; the beginning, by the bye, of that annoyance in 'one ear to which I am subject to this day. I wrote to say so, 'and added that I would resume my application next season. I 'made a great splash in the gallery soon afterwards; the *Chronicle* 'opened to me; I had a distinction in the little world of the 'newspaper, which made one like it; began to write; didn't 'want money; had never thought of the stage but as a means of 'getting it; gradually left off turning my thoughts that way, and 'never resumed the idea. I never told you this, did I? See 'how near I may have been to another sort of life.' The letter

Tries to get upon the stage.

in which he gave me this interesting detail, belongs to another place; but the anticipation of so much of it here is required to complete his boyish history. LONDON: 1833-5.

The beginning to write was a thing far more momentous to him (though then he did not know it) than his 'great splash' in the gallery. In the December number for 1833 of what then was called the *Old Monthly Magazine*, his first published piece of writing had seen the light. He has described himself dropping this paper (Mr. Minns and his Cousin, as he afterwards entitled it, but which appeared in the magazine as 'A Dinner at Poplar Walk) stealthily one evening at twilight, with fear and trembling, into a dark letter-box in a dark office up a dark court in Fleet-street; and he has told his agitation when it appeared in all the glory of print. 'On which occasion I walked down to West-'minster-hall, and turned into it for half an hour, because my eyes 'were so dimmed with joy and pride, that they could not bear 'the street, and were not fit to be seen there.' He had purchased the magazine at a shop in the Strand; and exactly two years afterwards, in the younger member of a publishing firm who had called at his chambers in Furnival's-inn, to which he had moved soon after entering the gallery, with the proposal that originated *Pickwick*, he recognized the person he had bought that magazine from, and whom before or since he had never seen. First published piece. 'Smallness of the world.'

This interval of two years more than comprised what remained of his career in the gallery and the engagements connected with it; but that this occupation was of the utmost importance in its influence on his life, in the discipline of his powers as well as of his character, there can be no doubt whatever. 'To the whole-'some training of severe newspaper work, when I was a very 'young man, I constantly refer my first successes,' he said to the New York editors when he last took leave of them. It opened to him a wide and varied range of experience, which his wonderful observation, exact as it was humorous, made entirely his own. He saw the last of the old coaching days, and of the old inns that were a part of them; but it will be long before the readers of his living page see the last of the life of either. 'There 'never was,' he once wrote to me (in 1845), 'anybody connected Discipline of reporting days.

London: 1834-6.

'with newspapers, who, in the same space of time, had so much 'express and post-chaise experience as I. And what gentlemen 'they were to serve, in such things, at the old *Morning Chronicle!* 'Great or small it did not matter. I have had to charge for

Experiences at *Morning Chronicle.*

'half-a-dozen break-downs in half-a-dozen times as many miles. 'I have had to charge for the damage of a great-coat from the 'drippings of a blazing wax-candle, in writing through the smallest 'hours of the night in a swift-flying carriage and pair. I have 'had to charge for all sorts of breakages fifty times in a journey 'without question, such being the ordinary results of the pace 'which we went at. I have charged for broken hats, broken 'luggage, broken chaises, broken harness—everything but a 'broken head, which is the only thing they would have grumbled 'to pay for.'

Sketch of his reporting life.

Something to the same effect he said publicly twenty years later, on the occasion of his presiding, in May 1865, at the second annual dinner of the newspaper-press-fund, when he condensed within the compass of his speech a summary of the whole of his reporting life. 'I am not here,' he said, 'advocating the case of 'a mere ordinary client of whom I have little or no knowledge. 'I hold a brief to-night for my brothers. I went into the gallery 'of the house of commons as a parliamentary reporter when I was 'a boy, and I left it—I can hardly believe the inexorable truth— 'nigh thirty years ago. I have pursued the calling of a reporter 'under circumstances of which many of my brethren here can 'form no adequate conception. I have often transcribed for the 'printer, from my shorthand notes, important public speeches in 'which the strictest accuracy was required, and a mistake in which 'would have been to a young man severely compromising, writing 'on the palm of my hand, by the light of a dark lantern, in a post- 'chaise and four, galloping through a wild country, and through

Expresses.

'the dead of the night, at the then surprising rate of fifteen miles 'an hour. The very last time I was at Exeter, I strolled into the 'castle-yard there to identify, for the amusement of a friend, the 'spot on which I once "took," as we used to call it, an election 'speech of Lord John Russell at the Devon contest, in the midst 'of a lively fight maintained by all the vagabonds in that division of

'the county, and under such a pelting rain, that I remember two 'good-natured colleagues who chanced to be at leisure held a 'pocket-handkerchief over my note-book, after the manner of a 'state canopy in an ecclesiastical procession. I have worn my 'knees by writing on them on the old back row of the old gallery 'of the old house of commons; and I have worn my feet by 'standing to write in a preposterous pen in the old house of 'lords, where we used to be huddled together like so many sheep '—kept in waiting, say, until the woolsack might want re-stuffing. 'Returning home from exciting political meetings in the country 'to the waiting press in London, I do verily believe I have been 'upset in almost every description of vehicle known in this 'country. I have been, in my time, belated on miry by-roads, 'towards the small hours, forty or fifty miles from London, in a 'wheelless carriage, with exhausted horses and drunken post-boys, 'and have got back in time for publication, to be received with 'never-forgotten compliments by the late Mr. Black, coming in 'the broadest of Scotch from the broadest of hearts I ever knew. 'These trivial things I mention as an assurance to you that I 'never have forgotten the fascination of that old pursuit. The 'pleasure that I used to feel in the rapidity and dexterity of its 'exercise has never faded out of my breast. Whatever little 'cunning of hand or head I took to it, or acquired in it, I have so 'retained that I fully believe I could resume it to-morrow, very 'little the worse from long disuse. To this present year of my 'life, when I sit in this hall, or where not, hearing a dull speech '(the phenomenon does occur), I sometimes beguile the tedium of 'the moment by mentally following the speaker in the old, old 'way; and sometimes, if you can believe me, I even find my hand 'going on the table-cloth, taking an imaginary note of it all.' The latter I have known him do frequently. It was indeed a quite ordinary habit with him.

LONDON: 1834-6.

Houses of parliament before Barry.

John Black of the *Chronicle*.

Imaginary note-taking.

Mr. James Grant, a writer who was himself in the gallery with Dickens, and who states that among its eighty or ninety reporters he occupied the very highest rank, not merely for accuracy in reporting but for marvellous quickness in transcribing, has lately also told us that while there he was exceedingly reserved in his

London: 1834-6.

manners, and that, though showing the usual courtesies to all he was concerned with in his duties, the only personal intimacy he formed was with Mr. Thomas Beard, then too reporting for the *Morning Chronicle*. I have already mentioned the friendly and familiar relations maintained with this gentleman to the close of his life; and in confirmation of Mr. Grant's statement I can further say that the only other associate of these early reporting days to whom I ever heard him refer with special regard, was the late Mr. Vincent Dowling, many years editor of *Bell's Life*, with whom he did not continue much personal intercourse, but of whose character as well as talents he had formed a very high opinion. Nor is there anything to add to the notice of this time which the reader's fancy may not easily supply. A letter has been kept as written by him while engaged on one of his 'expresses;' but it is less for its saying anything new, than for its confirming with a pleasant vividness what has been said already, that its contents will justify mention here.

Mr. Thomas Beard.

Mr. Vincent Dowling.

Bristol: 1835.

He writes, on a 'Tuesday morning' in May 1835, from the Bush-inn, Bristol; the occasion that has taken him to the west, connected with a reporting party, being Lord John Russell's Devonshire contest above-named, and his associate-chief being Mr. Beard, entrusted with command for the *Chronicle* in this particular express. He expects to forward 'the conclusion of 'Russell's dinner' by Cooper's company's coach leaving the Bush at half-past six next morning; and by the first Ball's coach on Thursday morning he will forward the report of the Bath dinner, indorsing the parcel for immediate delivery, with extra rewards for the porter. Beard is to go over to Bath next morning. He is himself to come back by the mail from Marlborough; he has no doubt, if Lord John makes a speech of any ordinary dimensions, it can be done by the time Marlborough is reached; 'and taking 'into consideration the immense importance of having the addi-'tion of saddle horses from thence, it is, beyond all doubt, 'worth an effort. . . . I need not say,' he continues, 'that it 'will be sharp work and will require two of us; for we shall both 'be up the whole of the previous night, and shall have to sit up 'all night again to get it off in time.' He adds that as soon as

An express expedition.

Letter during Devon contest.

they have had a little sleep they will return to town as quickly as they can: but they have, if the express succeeds, to stop at sundry places along the road to pay money and notify satisfaction. And so, for himself and Beard, he is his editor's very sincerely. LONDON: 1834-6.

Another anecdote of his reporting days, with its sequel, may be added from his own alleged relation, in which however mistakes occur that it seems strange he should have made. The story, as told, is that the late Lord Derby, when Mr. Stanley, had on some important occasion made a speech which all the reporters found it necessary greatly to abridge; that its essential points had nevertheless been so well given in the *Chronicle* that Mr. Stanley, having need of it for himself in greater detail, had sent a request to the reporter to meet him in Carlton-house-terrace and take down the entire speech; that Dickens attended and did the work accordingly, much to Mr. Stanley's satisfaction; and that, on his dining with Mr. Gladstone in recent years, and finding the aspect of the dining-room strangely familiar, he discovered afterwards on enquiry that it was there he had taken the speech. The story, as it actually occurred, is connected with the brief life of the *Mirror of Parliament*. It was not at any special desire of Mr. Stanley's, but for that new record of the debates, which had been started by one of the uncles of Dickens and professed to excel *Hansard* in giving verbatim reports, that the famous speech against O'Connell was taken as described. The young reporter went to the room in Carlton-terrace because the work of his uncle Barrow's publication required to be done there; and if, in later years, the great author was in the same room as the guest of the prime minister, it must have been but a month or two before he died, when for the first time he visited and breakfasted with Mr. Gladstone. Stanley's speech against O'Connell. Re-reported for the *Mirror of Parliament*.

The mention of his career in the gallery may close with the incident. I will only add that his observation while there had not led him to form any high opinion of the house of commons or its heroes; and that, of the Pickwickian sense which so often takes the place of common sense in our legislature, he omitted no opportunity of declaring his contempt at every part of his life.

The other occupation had meanwhile not been lost sight of, and for this we are to go back a little. Since the first sketch Nine sketches in the *Monthly*.

LONDON: 1835.

appeared in the *Monthly Magazine*, nine others have enlivened the pages of later numbers of the same magazine, the last in February 1835, and that which appeared in the preceding August having first had the signature of Boz. This was the nick-name of a pet child, his youngest brother Augustus, whom in honour of the *Vicar of Wakefield* he had dubbed Moses, which being facetiously pronounced through the nose became Boses, and being shortened became Boz. 'Boz was a very familiar house-'hold word to me, long before I was an author, and so I came to 'adopt it.' Thus had he fully invented his sketches by Boz before they were even so called, or any one was ready to give much attention to them; and the next invention needful to him-self was some kind of payment in return for them. The magazine was owned as well as conducted at this time by a Mr. Holland, who had come back from Bolivar's South American campaigns with the rank of captain, and had hoped to make it a popular mouthpiece for his ardent liberalism. But this hope, as well as his own health, quite failed; and he had sorrowfully to decline receiving any more of the sketches when they had to cease as voluntary offerings. I do not think that either he or the magazine lived many weeks after an evening I passed with him in Doughty-street, in 1837, when he spoke in a very touching way of the failure of this and other enterprises of his life, and of the help that Dickens had been to him.

Origin of "Boz."

Captain Holland.

Nothing thus being forthcoming from the *Monthly*, it was of course but natural that the sketches too should cease to be forth-coming; and, even before the above-named February number appeared, a new opening had been found for them. An evening off-shoot to the *Morning Chronicle* had been lately in hand; and to a countryman of Black's engaged in the preparations for it, Mr. George Hogarth, Dickens was communicating from his rooms in Furnival's-inn, on the evening of Tuesday the 20th of January, 1835, certain hopes and fancies he had formed. This was the beginning of his knowledge of an accomplished and kindly man, with whose family his relations were soon to become so intimate as to have an influence on all his future career. Mr. Hogarth had asked him, as a favour to himself, to write an original sketch for

Mr. George Hogarth.

the first number of the enterprise, and in writing back to say with what readiness he should comply, and how anxiously he should desire to do his best for the person who had made the request, he mentioned what had arisen in his mind. It had occurred to him that he might not be unreasonably or improperly trespassing farther on Mr. Hogarth, if, trusting to his kindness to refer the application to the proper quarter, he begged to ask whether it was probable, if he commenced a regular series of articles under some attractive title for the *Evening Chronicle*, its conductors would think he had any claim to *some* additional remuneration (of course, of no great amount) for doing so. In short, he wished to put it to the proprietors—first, whether a continuation of some chapters of light papers in the style of his street-sketches would be considered of use to the new journal; and secondly, if so, whether they would not think it fair and reasonable that, taking his share of the ordinary reporting business of the *Chronicle* besides, he should receive something for the papers beyond his ordinary salary as a reporter? The request was thought fair, he began the sketches, and his salary was raised from five to seven guineas a week.

LONDON: 1835-6.

Sketches continued in *Evening Chronicle*.

Salary raised.

They went on, with undiminished spirit and freshness, throughout the year; and much as they were talked of outside as well as in the world of newspapers, nothing in connection with them delighted the writer half so much as the hearty praise of his own editor. Mr. Black is one of the men who have passed without recognition out of a world their labours largely benefited, but with those who knew him no man was so popular, as well for his broad kindly humour, as for his honest great-hearted enjoyment of whatever was excellent in others. Dickens to the last remembered, that it was most of all the cordial help of this good old mirth-loving man, which had started him joyfully on his career of letters. It was John Black that flung the slipper after me, he would often say. 'Dear old Black! my first hearty out-and-out appreciator,' is an expression in one of his letters written to me in the year he died.

Mr. John Black.

Black's timely help

V.

FIRST BOOK AND ORIGIN OF PICKWICK.

1836.

LONDON: 1836.

THE opening of 1836 found him collecting into two volumes the first series of *Sketches by Boz*, of which he had sold the copyright for a conditional payment of (I think) a hundred and fifty pounds to a young publisher named Macrone, whose acquaintance he had made through Mr. Ainsworth a few weeks before.* At this time also, we are told in a letter before quoted, the editorship of the *Monthly Magazine* having come into Mr. James Grant's hands, this gentleman, applying to him through its previous editor to know if he would again contribute to it, learnt two things: the first that he was going to be married, and the second that having entered into an arrangement to write a monthly serial his duties in future would leave him small spare time. Both pieces of news

First series of *Sketches*.

Fancy-piece by Mr. Willis:

a poor English author.

* To this date belongs a visit paid him at Furnival's-inn in Mr. Macrone's company, by the notorious Mr. N. P. Willis, who calls him 'a young paragraphist for the *Morning Chronicle*,' and thus sketches his residence and himself. 'In the most crowded part of Holborn, within a door or two of the Bull-and-mouth inn, we pulled up at the entrance of a large building used for lawyers' chambers. I followed by a long flight of stairs to an upper story, and was ushered into an uncarpeted and bleak-looking room, with a deal table, two or three chairs and a few books, a small boy and Mr. Dickens, for the contents. I was only struck at first with one thing (and I made a memorandum of it that evening as the strongest instance I had seen of English obsequiousness to employers), the degree to which the poor author was overpowered with the honour of his publisher's visit! I remember saying to myself, as I sat down on a ricketty chair, "My good fellow, if "you were in America with that "fine face and your ready quill, you "would have no need to be condescended to by a publisher." Dickens was dressed very much as he has since described Dick Swiveller, *minus* the swell look. His hair was cropped close to his head, his clothes scant, though jauntily cut, and after changing a ragged office-coat for a shabby blue, he stood by the door, collarless and buttoned up, the very personification, I thought, of a close sailer to the wind.' I remember, while my friend lived, our laughing heartily at this description, hardly a word of which is true; and I give it now as no unfair specimen of the kind of garbage that since his death also has been served up only too plentifully, by some of his own as well as by others of Mr. Willis's countrymen.

were soon confirmed. The *Times* of the 26th of March, 1836, gave notice that on the 31st would be published the first shilling number of the *Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club, edited by Boz;* and the same journal of a few days later announced that on the 2nd of April Mr. Charles Dickens had married Catherine, the eldest daughter of Mr. George Hogarth, whom already we have met as his fellow-worker on the *Chronicle*. The honeymoon was passed in the neighbourhood to which at all times of interest in his life he turned with a strange recurring fondness; and while the young couple are at the quiet little village of Chalk, on the road between Gravesend and Rochester, I will relate exactly the origin of the ever-memorable Mr. Pickwick.

LONDON: 1836.

First number of *Pickwick*.

Marriage of Dickens.

A new publishing house had started recently, among other enterprises ingenious rather than important, a Library of Fiction; among the authors they wished to enlist in it was the writer of the sketches in the *Monthly;* and, to the extent of one paper during the past year, they had effected this through their editor, Mr. Charles Whitehead, a very ingenious and a very unfortunate man. 'I was not aware,' wrote the elder member of the firm to Dickens, thirteen years later, in a letter to which reference was made* in the preface to *Pickwick* in one of his later editions, 'that you were 'writing in the *Chronicle*, or what your name was; but Whitehead, 'who was an old *Monthly* man, recollected it, and got you to 'write The Tuggs's at Ramsgate.'

Overtures from Chapman and Hall.

And now comes another person on the scene. 'In November '1835,' continues Mr. Chapman, 'we published a little book 'called the *Squib Annual*, with plates by Seymour; and it was 'during my visit to him to see after them, that he said he should 'like to do a series of cockney-sporting plates of a superior sort 'to those he had already published. I said I thought they might

Mr. Seymour and his *Squib Annual*.

* Not quoted in detail, on that or any other occasion; though referred to. It was however placed in my hands, for use if occasion should arise, when Dickens went to America in 1867. The letter bears date the 7th July, 1849, and was Mr. Chapman's answer to the question Dickens had asked him, whether the account of the origin of *Pickwick* which he had given in the preface to the cheap edition in 1847 was not strictly correct? 'It is *so* correctly described,' was Mr. Chapman's opening remark, 'that I can throw but little additional 'light on it.' The name of his hero, I may add, Dickens took from that of a celebrated coach-proprietor of Bath.

Mr. Pickwick of Bath.

London: 1836.

'do, if accompanied by letter-press and published in monthly 'parts; and this being agreed to, we wrote to the author of *Three 'Courses and a Dessert*, and proposed it; but receiving no answer 'the scheme dropped for some months, till Seymour said he wished 'us to decide, as another job had offered which would fully occupy 'his time; and it was on this we decided to ask you to do it. 'Having opened already a connection with you for our Library of

Origin of *Pickwick*.

'Fiction, we naturally applied to you to do the *Pickwick;* but I 'do not think we even mentioned our intention to Mr. Seymour, 'and I am quite sure that from the beginning to the end nobody 'but yourself had anything whatever to do with it. Our prospectus 'was out at the end of February, and it had all been arranged 'before that date.'

Mr. Hall at Furnival's-inn.

The member of the firm who carried the application to him in Furnival's-inn, was not the writer of this letter, but Mr. Hall, who had sold him two years before, not knowing that he was the purchaser, the magazine in which his first effusion was printed; and he has himself described what passed at the interview. 'The 'idea propounded to me was that the monthly something should 'be a vehicle for certain plates to be executed by Mr. Seymour;

What was proposed by others.

'and there was a notion, either on the part of that admirable 'humorous artist, or of my visitor, that a Nimrod Club, the 'members of which were to go out shooting, fishing, and so forth, 'and getting themselves into difficulties through their want of 'dexterity, would be the best means of introducing these. I 'objected, on consideration, that although born and partly bred 'in the country I was no great sportsman, except in regard to 'all kinds of locomotion; that the idea was not novel, and had 'already been much used; that it would be infinitely better for

What was substituted by himself.

'the plates to arise naturally out of the text: and that I would 'like to take my own way, with a freer range of English scenes 'and people, and was afraid I should ultimately do so in any 'case, whatever course I might prescribe to myself at starting. 'My views being deferred to, I thought of Mr. Pickwick, and 'wrote the first number; from the proof sheets of which Mr. 'Seymour made his drawing of the club and his happy portrait 'of its founder. I connected Mr. Pickwick with a club, because

'of the original suggestion; and I put in Mr. Winkle expressly 'for the use of Mr. Seymour.' LONDON: 1836.

Mr. Hall was dead when this statement was first made, in the preface to the cheap edition in 1847; but Mr. Chapman clearly recollected his partner's account of the interview, and confirmed every part of it, in his letter of 1849,* with one exception. In giving Mr. Seymour credit for the figure by which all the habitable globe knows Mr. Pickwick, and which certainly at the outset helped to make him a reality, it had given the artist too much. The reader will hardly be so startled as I was on coming to the closing line of Mr. Chapman's confirmatory letter. 'As this letter 'is to be historical, I may as well claim what little belongs to me 'in the matter, and that is the figure of Pickwick. Seymour's 'first sketch was of a long, thin man. The present immortal 'one he made from my description of a friend of mine at Rich-'mond, a fat old beau who would wear, in spite of the ladies' pro-'tests, drab tights and black gaiters. His name was John Foster.'

Mr. Chapman's confirmation (1849).

The original of Mr. Pickwick in figure and name.

On the coincidences, resemblances, and surprises of life, Dickens liked especially to dwell, and few things moved his fancy so pleasantly. The world, he would say, was so much smaller than we thought it; we were all so connected by fate without knowing it; people supposed to be far apart were so constantly elbowing each other; and to-morrow bore so close a resemblance to nothing half so much as to yesterday. Here were the only two leading incidents of his own life before I knew him, his marriage and the first appearance of his Pickwick; and it turned out after all that I had some shadowy association with both. He was married on the anniversary of my birthday, and the original of the figure of Mr. Pickwick bore my name.†

Surprises of life, and smallness of the world.

* The appeal was then made to him because of recent foolish statements by members of Mr. Seymour's family, which Dickens formally contradicted. The 'written testimony' to which on this occasion he referred in support of his averments, he placed in my hands on quitting England for his last visit to America; and it remains in my possession.

† Whether Mr. Chapman spelt the name correctly, or has unconsciously deprived his fat beau of the letter 'r,' I cannot say; but experience tells me that the latter is probable. I have been trying all my life to get my own name spelt correctly, and have only very imperfectly succeeded.

London: 1836.

Publication of the *Sketches.*

The first number had not yet appeared when his *Sketches by Boz, Illustrative of Every-Day Life and Every-Day People*, came forth in two duodecimos with some capital cuts by Cruikshank, and with a preface in which he spoke of the nervousness he should have had in venturing alone before the public, and of his delight in getting the help of Cruikshank, who had frequently contributed to the success, though his well-earned reputation rendered it impossible for him ever to have shared the hazard, of similar undertakings. It very soon became apparent that there was no hazard here. The *Sketches* were much more talked about than the first two or three numbers of *Pickwick*, and I remember still with what hearty praise the book was first named to me by my dear friend Albany Fonblanque, as keen and clear a judge as ever lived either of books or men. Richly did it merit all the praise it had, and more, I will add, than he was ever disposed to give to it himself. He decidedly underrated it. He gave, in subsequent writings, so much more perfect form and fullness to everything it contained, that he did not care to credit himself with the marvel of having yet so early anticipated so much. But the first sprightly runnings of his genius are undoubtedly here. Mr. Bumble is in the parish sketches, and Mr. Dawkins the dodger in the Old-bailey scenes. There is laughter and fun to excess, never misapplied; there are the minute points and shades of character, with all the discrimination and nicety of detail, afterwards so famous; there is everywhere the most perfect ease and skill of handling. The observation shown throughout is nothing short of wonderful. Things are painted literally as they are; and, whatever the picture, whether of every-day vulgar, shabby genteel, or downright low, with neither the condescending air which is affectation, nor the too familiar one which is slang. The book altogether is a perfectly unaffected, unpretentious, honest performance. Under its manly sensible straightforward vein of talk, there is running at the same time a natural flow of sentiment never sentimental, of humour always easy and unforced, and of pathos for the most part dramatic or picturesque, under which lay the germ of what his mature genius took afterwards most delight in. Of course there

The book illustrated by Cruikshank.

First sprightly runnings.

Success well merited.

are inequalities in it, and some things that would have been better away: but it is a book that might have stood its ground, even if it had stood alone, as containing unusually truthful observation of a sort of life between the middle class and the low, which, having few attractions for bookish observers, was quite unhacknied ground. It had otherwise also the very special merit of being in no respect bookish or commonplace in its descriptions of the old city with which its writer was so familiar. It was a picture of every-day London at its best and worst, in its humours and enjoyments as well as its sufferings and sins, pervaded everywhere not only with the absolute reality of the things depicted, but also with that subtle sense and mastery of feeling which gives to the reader's sympathies invariably right direction, and awakens consideration, tenderness, and kindness precisely for those who most need such help.

LONDON. 1836. *Sketches* characterized.

Between the first and the second numbers of *Pickwick*, the artist, Mr. Seymour, died by his own hand; and the number came out with three instead of four illustrations. Dickens had seen the unhappy man only once, forty-eight hours before his death; when he went to Furnival's-inn with an etching for the 'stroller's-tale' in that number, which, altered at Dickens's suggestion, he brought away again for the few further touches that occupied him to a late hour of the night before he destroyed himself. A notice attached to the number informed the public of this latter fact. There was at first a little difficulty in replacing him, and for a single number Mr. Buss was interposed. But before the fourth number a choice had been made, which as time went on was so thoroughly justified, that through the greater part of the wonderful career which was then beginning the connection was kept up, and Mr. Hablot Browne's name is not unworthily associated with the masterpieces of Dickens's genius. An incident which I heard related by Mr. Thackeray at one of the royal-academy dinners belongs to this time. 'I can remember 'when Mr Dickens was a very young man, and had commenced 'delighting the world with some charming humorous works in 'covers which were coloured light green and came out once a 'month, that this young man wanted an artist to illustrate his

Death of Mr. Seymour.

Successor chosen.

LONDON: 1836.

'writings; and I recollect walking up to his chambers in Fur-'nival's-inn, with two or three drawings in my hand, which, 'strange to say, he did not find suitable.' Dickens has himself described another change now made in the publication. 'We 'started with a number of twenty-four pages and four illustrations. 'Mr. Seymour's sudden and lamented death before the second 'number was published, brought about a quick decision upon 'a point already in agitation; the number became one of thirty-'two pages with only two illustrations, and remained so to the end.'

Reporting days close.

The Session of 1836 terminated his connection with the gallery, and some fruits of his increased leisure showed themselves before the close of the year. His eldest sister's musical attainments and connections had introduced him to many cultivators and professors of that art; he was led to take much interest in Mr. Braham's enterprise at the St. James's-theatre; and in aid of it he wrote a farce for Mr. Harley, founded upon one of his sketches, and the story and songs for an opera composed by his friend Mr. Hullah. Both the *Strange Gentleman*, acted in September, and the *Village Coquettes*, produced in December, 1836, had a good success; and the last is memorable to me for having brought me first into personal communication with Dickens.

Strange Gentleman and *Village Coquettes.*

BOOK SECOND.

FIRST FIVE YEARS OF FAME.

1836—1841. ÆT. 24—29.

I. WRITING THE PICKWICK PAPERS.
II. BETWEEN PICKWICK AND NICKLEBY.
III. OLIVER TWIST.
IV. NICHOLAS NICKLEBY.
V. DURING AND AFTER NICKLEBY.
VI. NEW LITERARY PROJECT.
VII. OLD CURIOSITY SHOP.
VIII. DEVONSHIRE TERRACE AND BROADSTAIRS.
IX. BARNABY RUDGE.
X. IN EDINBURGH.
XI. IN THE HIGHLANDS.
XII. AGAIN AT BROADSTAIRS.

I.

WRITING THE PICKWICK PAPERS.

1837.

THE first letter I had from him was at the close of 1836 from Furnival's-inn, when he sent me the book of his opera of the *Village Coquettes*, which had been published by Mr. Bentley; and this was followed, two months later, by his collected *Sketches*, both first and second series; which he desired me to receive 'as a very 'small testimony of the donor's regard and obligations, as well as 'of his desire to cultivate and avail himself of a friendship which 'has been so pleasantly thrown in his way . . . . In short, if you 'will receive them for my sake and not for their own, you will 'very greatly oblige me.' I had met him in the interval at the house of our common friend Mr. Ainsworth, and I remember vividly the impression then made upon me.

LONDON: 1837.

Furnival's-inn.

Very different was his face in those days from that which photography has made familiar to the present generation. A look of youthfulness first attracted you, and then a candour and openness of expression which made you sure of the qualities within. The features were very good. He had a capital forehead, a firm nose with full wide nostril, eyes wonderfully beaming with intellect and running over with humour and cheerfulness, and a rather prominent mouth strongly marked with sensibility. The head was altogether well-formed and symmetrical, and the air and carriage of it were extremely spirited. The hair so scant and grizzled in later days was then of a rich brown and most luxuriant abundance, and the bearded face of his last two decades had hardly a vestige of hair or whisker; but there was that in the face as I first recollect it which no time could change, and which remained implanted on it unalterably to the last. This was the quickness, keenness, and practical power, the eager, restless, energetic outlook on each several feature, that seemed to tell so little of a student or writer of books, and so much of a man of action and business in the

As he was 35 years ago.

Personal description.

London: 1837.

world. Light and motion flashed from every part of it. *It was as if made of steel,* was said of it, four or five years after the time to which I am referring, by a most original and delicate observer, the late Mrs. Carlyle. 'What a face is his to meet in a drawing-'room!' wrote Leigh Hunt to me, the morning after I made them known to each other. 'It has the life and soul in it of fifty human 'beings.' In such sayings are expressed not alone the restless and resistless vivacity and force of which I have spoken, but that also which lay beneath them of steadiness and hard endurance.

Remark of Mrs. Carlyle.

Of Leigh Hunt.

Several unsuccessful efforts were made by each to get the other to his house before the door of either was opened at last. A son had been born to him on twelfth-day (the 6th January 1837), and before the close of the following month he and his wife were in the lodgings at Chalk they had occupied after their marriage. Early in March there is a letter from him accounting for the failure of a promise to call on me because of 'a crew of house 'agents and attornies' through whom he had nearly missed his conveyance to Chalk, and been made 'more than half wild besides.' This was his last letter from Furnival's-inn. In that same month he went to 48, Doughty-street; and in his first letter to me from that address, dated at the close of the month, there is this passage.

Birth of his eldest son.

'We only called upon you a second time in the hope of getting 'you to dine with us, and were much disappointed not to find 'you. I have delayed writing a reply to your note, meaning to 'call upon you. I have been so much engaged, however, in the 'pleasant occupation of "moving" that I have not had time; 'and I am obliged at last to write and say that I have been long 'engaged to the *Pickwick* publishers to a dinner in honour of that 'hero which comes off to-morrow. I am consequently unable to 'accept your kind invite, which I frankly own I should have liked 'much better.'

In Doughty-street.

That Saturday's celebration of his twelfth number, the anniversary of the birth of *Pickwick,* preceded by but a few weeks a personal sorrow which profoundly moved him. His wife's next youngest sister, Mary, who lived with them, and by sweetness of nature even more than by graces of person had made herself the ideal of his life, died with a terrible suddenness that for the time

A long-remembered sorrow.

completely bore him down.* His grief and suffering were intense, and affected him, as will be seen, through many after years. The publication of *Pickwick* was interrupted for two months, the effort of writing it not being possible to him. He moved for change of scene to Hampstead, and here, at the close of May, I visited him, and became first his guest. More than ordinarily susceptible at the moment to all kindliest impressions, his heart opened itself to mine. I left him as much his friend, and as entirely in his confidence, as if I had known him for years. Nor had many weeks passed before he addressed to me from Doughty-street words which it is my sorrowful pride to remember have had literal fulfilment. 'I look back with unmingled pleasure to every link which each ensuing week has added to the chain of our attachment. It shall go hard, I hope, ere anything but Death impairs the toughness of a bond now so firmly riveted.' It remained unweakened till death came.

HAMPSTEAD: 1837.

Beginning of a long friendship.

There were circumstances that drew us at once into frequent and close communication. What the sudden popularity of his writings implied, was known to others some time before it was known to himself; and he was only now becoming gradually conscious of all the disadvantage this had placed him at. He would have laughed if, at this outset of his wonderful fortune in literature, his genius acknowledged by all without misgiving, young, popular, and prosperous, any one had compared him to the luckless men of letters of former days, whose common fate was to be sold into a slavery which their later lives were passed in vain endeavours to escape from. Not so was his fate to be, yet something of it he was doomed to experience. He had unwittingly sold himself into a quasi-bondage, and had to purchase his liberty at a heavy cost, after considerable suffering.

Hasty contracts.

Self-sold into bondage.

It was not until the fourth or fifth number of *Pickwick* (in the latter Sam Weller made his first appearance) that its importance began to be understood by 'the trade,' and on the eve of the issue of its sixth number, the 22nd August 1836, he had signed an

* Her epitaph, written by him, remains upon a gravestone in the cemetery at Kensal-green. 'Young, beautiful, and good, God numbered her among his angels at the early age of seventeen.'

LONDON: 1837.

Agreements with publishers.

agreement with Mr. Bentley to undertake the editorship of a monthly magazine to be started the following January, to which he was to supply a serial story; and soon afterwards he had agreed with the same publisher to write two other tales, the first at a specified early date; the expressed remuneration in each case being certainly inadequate to the claims of a writer of any marked popularity. Under these Bentley agreements he was now writing, month by month, the first half of *Oliver Twist*, and, under his Chapman and Hall agreement, the last half of *Pickwick*, not even by a week in advance of the printer with either; when a circumstance became known to him of which he thus wrote to me.

Mr. Macrone.

'I heard half-an-hour ago, on authority which leaves me in no 'doubt about the matter (from the binder of *Pickwick* in fact), 'that Macrone intends publishing a new issue of my *Sketches* 'in monthly parts of nearly the same size and in just the same 'form as the *Pickwick Papers*. I need not tell you that this is 'calculated to injure me most seriously, or that I have a very 'natural and most decided objection to being supposed to presume 'upon the success of the *Pickwick*, and thus foist this old work 'upon the public in its new dress for the mere purpose of putting 'money in my own pocket. Neither need I say that the fact of my 'name being before the town, attached to three publications at 'the same time, must prove seriously prejudicial to my reputation. 'As you are acquainted with the circumstances under which these 'copyrights were disposed of, and as I know I may rely on your 'kind help, may I beg you to see Macrone, and to state in the 'strongest and most emphatic manner my feeling on this point.

A scheme to re-issue *Sketches*.

'I wish him to be reminded of the sums he paid for those books; 'of the sale he has had for them; of the extent to which he has 'already pushed them; and of the very great profits he must 'necessarily have acquired from them. I wish him also to be 'reminded that no intention of publishing them in this form was 'in the remotest manner hinted to me, by him or on his behalf, 'when he obtained possession of the copyright. I then wish you 'to put it to his feelings of common honesty and fair-dealing 'whether after this communication he will persevere in his in-

'tention.' What else the letter contained need not be quoted, but it strongly moved me to do my best. LONDON: 1837.

I found Mr. Macrone inaccessible to all arguments of persuasion however. That he had bought the book for a small sum at a time when the smallest was not unimportant to the writer, shortly before his marriage, and that he had since made very considerable profits by it, in no way disturbed his position that he had a right to make as much as he could of what was his, without regard to how it had become so. There was nothing for it but to change front, and, admitting it might be a less evil to the unlucky author to repurchase than to let the monthly issue proceed, to ask what further gain was looked for: but so wide a mouth was opened at this that I would have no part in the costly process of filling it. I told Dickens so, and strongly counselled him to keep quiet for a time. Attempt to prevent this.

But the worry and vexation were too great with all the work he had in hand, and I was hardly surprised next day to receive the letter sent me; which yet should be prefaced with the remark that suspense of any kind was at all times intolerable to the writer. The interval between the accomplishment of anything, and 'its 'first motion,' Dickens never could endure, and he was too ready to make any sacrifice to abridge or end it. This did not belong to the strong side of his character, and advantage was frequently taken of the fact. 'I sent down just now to know whether you 'were at home (two o'clock), as Chapman and Hall were with me, 'and, the case being urgent, I wished to have the further benefit 'of your kind advice and assistance. Macrone and his friend '(arcades ambo) waited on them this morning, and after a long 'discussion peremptorily refused to take one farthing less than the 'two thousand pounds. The friend repeated the statement of figures 'which he made to you yesterday, and put it to Hall whether he 'could say from his knowledge of such matters that the estimate 'of probable profit was exorbitant. Hall, whose judgment may be 'relied on in such matters, could not dispute the justice of the 'calculation. And so the matter stood. In this dilemma it 'occurred to them (my *Pickwick* men), whether, if the *Sketches* '*must* appear in monthly numbers, it would not be better for Impatience of waiting. £2000 asked for what £150 had purchased.

LONDON: 1837.

'them to appear for their benefit and mine conjointly, than for 'Macrone's sole use and behoof; whether they, having all the '*Pickwick* machinery in full operation, could not obtain for them 'a much larger sale than Macrone could ever get; and whether, 'even at this large price of two thousand pounds, we might not, 'besides retaining the copyright, reasonably hope for a good profit 'on the outlay. These suggestions having presented themselves,

Chapma & Hall advise purchase: See *post*, B. vi. § 4.

'they came straight to me (having obtained a few hours' re-'spite) and proposed that we should purchase the copyrights 'between us for the two thousand pounds, and publish them in 'monthly parts. I need not say that no other form of publication 'would repay the expenditure; and they wish me to explain by 'an address that *they*, who may be fairly put forward as the parties, 'have been driven into that mode of publication, or the copy-'rights would have been lost. I considered the matter in every 'possible way. I sent for you, but you were out. I thought of' (what need not be repeated, now that all is past and gone) 'and consented. Was I right? I think you will say yes.' I could not say no, though I was glad to have been no party to a price so exorbitant; which yet profited extremely little the person who received it. He died in hardly more than two years; and if Dickens had enjoyed the most liberal treatment at his hands, he could not have exerted himself more generously for the widow and children.

Close of dealings with Mr. Macrone.

Oliver Twist.

His new story was now beginning largely to share attention with his *Pickwick Papers*, and it was delightful to see how real all its people became to him. What I had most indeed to notice in him, at the very outset of his career, was his indifference to any praise of his performances on the merely literary side, compared with the higher recognition of them as bits of actual life, with the meaning and purpose on their part, and the responsibility on his, of realities rather than creatures of fancy. The exception that might be drawn from *Pickwick* is rather in seeming than substance. A first book has its immunities, and the distinction of this from the rest of the writings appears in what has been said of its origin. The plan of it was simply to amuse. It was to string together whimsical sketches of the pencil by entertaining sketches

Distinction of *Pickwick* from other works.

of the pen; and, at its beginning, where or how it was to end was as little known to himself as to any of its readers. But genius is a master as well as a servant, and when the laughter and fun were at their highest something graver made its appearance. He had to defend himself for this; and he said that though the mere oddity of a new acquaintance was apt to impress one at first, the more serious qualities were discovered when we became friends with the man. In other words he might have said that the change was become necessary for his own satisfaction. The book itself, in teaching him what his power was, had made him more conscious of what would be expected from its use; and this never afterwards quitted him. In what he was to do hereafter, as in all he was doing now, with *Pickwick* still to finish and *Oliver* only beginning, it constantly attended him. Nor could it well be otherwise, with all those fanciful creations so real, to a nature ir itself so practical and earnest; and in this spirit I had well understood the letter accompanying what had been published of *Oliver* since its commencement the preceding February, which reached me the day after I visited him. Something to the effect of what has just been said, I had remarked publicly of the portion of the story sent to me; and his instant warm-hearted acknowledgment, of which I permit myself to quote a line or two, showed me in what perfect agreement we were. 'How can I thank you? 'Can I do better than by saying that the sense of poor Oliver's 'reality, which I know you have had from the first, has been the 'highest of all praise to me. None that has been lavished upon 'me have I felt half so much as that appreciation of my intent 'and meaning. You know I have ever done so, for it was your 'feeling for me and mine for you that first brought us together, 'and I hope will keep us so, till death do us part. Your notices 'make me grateful but very proud; so have a care of them.'

LONDON: 1837.

Sense of responsibility for his writings.

Of *Oliver Twist.*

There was nothing written by him after this date which I did not see before the world did, either in manuscript or proofs; and in connection with the latter I shortly began to give him the help which he publicly mentioned twenty years later in dedicating his collected writings to me. One of his letters reminds me when these corrections began, and they were continued very nearly to

Help given with his proofs.

London: 1837.

the last. They lightened for him a labour of which he had more than enough imposed upon him at this time by others, and they were never anything but an enjoyment to me. 'I have,' he wrote, 'so many sheets of the *Miscellany* to correct before I can begin '*Oliver*, that I fear I shall not be able to leave home this morn-

Pickwick No. XIV.

'ing. I therefore send your revise of the *Pickwick* by Fred, who 'is on his way with it to the printers. You will see that my 'alterations are very slight, but I think for the better.' This was the fourteenth number of the *Pickwick Papers*. Fred was his next younger brother, who lived with him at the time.

The number following this was the famous one in which the hero finds himself in the Fleet, and another of his letters will show what enjoyment the writing of it had given to himself. I had sent to ask him where we were to meet for a proposed ride that day. 'Here,' was his reply. 'I am slippered and jacketted, 'and, like that same starling who is so very seldom quoted, can't

Writing No. XV.

'get out. I am getting on, thank Heaven, like "a house o' fire," 'and think the next *Pickwick* will bang all the others. I shall 'expect you at one, and we will walk to the stable together. 'If you know anybody at Saint Paul's, I wish you'd send round 'and ask them not to ring the bell so. I can hardly hear my 'own ideas as they come into my head, and say what they 'mean.'

The exulting tone of confidence in what he had thus been writing was indeed well justified. He had as yet done nothing so remarkable, in blending humour with tragedy, as his picture of

The debtors' prison in *Pickwick*.

what the poor side of a debtors' prison was in the days of which we have seen that he had himself had bitter experience; and we have but to recall, as it rises sharply to the memory, what is contained in this portion of a work that was not only among his earliest but his least considered as to plan, to understand what it was that not alone had given him his fame so early, but which in itself held the germ of the future that awaited him. Every point was a telling one, and the truthfulness of the whole unerring. The dreadful restlessness of the place, undefined yet unceasing, unsatisfying and terrible, was pictured throughout with De Foe's minute reality; while points of character were handled in that

greater style which connects with the richest oddities of humour an insight into principles of character universal as nature itself. When he resolved that Sam Weller should be occupant of the prison with Mr. Pickwick, he was perhaps thinking of his favourite Smollett, and how, when Peregrine Pickle was inmate of the Fleet, Hatchway and Pipes refused to leave him; but Fielding himself might have envied his way of setting about it. Nor is any portion of his picture less admirable than this. The comedy gradually deepening into tragedy; the shabby vagabonds who are the growth of debtors' prisons, contrasting with the poor simple creatures who are their sacrifices and victims; Mr. Mivins and Mr. Smangle side by side with the cobbler ruined by his legacy, who sleeps under the table to remind himself of his old four-poster; Mr. Pickwick's first night in the marshal's room, Sam Weller entertaining Stiggins in the snuggery, Jingle in decline, and the chancery prisoner dying; in all these scenes there was writing of the first order, a deep feeling of character, that delicate form of humour which has a quaintly pathetic turn in it as well, comedy of the richest and broadest kind, and the easy handling throughout of a master in his art. We place the picture by the side of those of the great writers of this style of fiction in our language, and it does not fall by the comparison.

LONDON: 1837.

A recollection of Smollett.

Gaol scenes.

Of what the reception of the book had been up to this time, and of the popularity Dickens had won as its author, this also will be the proper place to speak. For its kind, its extent, and the absence of everything unreal or factitious in the causes that contributed to it, it is unexampled in literature. Here was a series of sketches, without the pretence to such interest as attends a well-constructed story; put forth in a form apparently ephemeral as its purpose; having none that seemed higher than to exhibit some studies of cockney manners with help from a comic artist; and after four or five parts had appeared, without newspaper notice or puffing, and itself not subserving in the public anything false or unworthy, it sprang into a popularity that each part carried higher and higher, until people at this time talked of nothing else, tradesmen recommended their goods by using its name, and its sale, outstripping at a bound that of all the most

Reception of *Pickwick*.

A popular rage.

London: 1837.

famous books of the century, had reached to an almost fabulous number. Of part one, the binder prepared four hundred; and of part fifteen, his order was for more than forty thousand. Every class, the high equally with the low, were attracted to it. The charm of its gaiety and good humour, its inexhaustible fun, its riotous overflow of animal spirits, its brightness and keenness of observation, and above all, the incomparable ease of its many varieties of enjoyment, fascinated everybody. Judges on the bench and boys in the street, gravity and folly, the young and the old, those who were entering life and those who were quitting it, alike found it to be irresistible. 'An archdeacon,' wrote Mr. Carlyle afterwards to me, 'with his own venerable lips, repeated 'to me, the other night, a strange profane story: of a solemn 'clergyman who had been administering ghostly consolation to a 'sick person; having finished, satisfactorily as he thought, and 'got out of the room, he heard the sick person ejaculate: "Well, '"thank God, *Pickwick* will be out in ten days any way!"—This 'is dreadful.'

Mr. Carlyle's 'dreadful' story.

Let me add that there was something more in it all than the gratification of mere fun and laughter, or even than the rarer pleasure that underlies the outbreak of all forms of genuine humour. Another chord had been struck. Over and above the lively painting of manners which at first had been so attractive, there was something that left deeper mark. Genial and irrepressible enjoyment, affectionate heartiness of tone, unrestrained exuberance of mirth, these are not more delightful than they are fleeting and perishable qualities; but the attention eagerly excited by the charm of them in *Pickwick*, found itself retained by something more permanent. We had all become suddenly conscious, in the very thick of the extravaganza of adventure and fun set before us, that here were real people. It was not somebody talking humorously about them, but they were there themselves. That a number of persons belonging to the middle and lower ranks of life (Wardles, Winkles, Wellers, Tupmans, Bardells, Snubbinses, Perkers, Bob Sawyers, Dodsons and Foggs,) had been somehow added to his intimate and familiar acquaintance, the ordinary reader knew before half a dozen numbers were out;

One secret of the success.

Reality of characters.

and it took not many more to make clear to the intelligent reader, that a new and original genius in the walk of Smollett and Fielding had arisen in England. LONDON: 1837.

I do not, for reasons to be hereafter stated, think the *Pickwick Papers* comparable to the later books; but, apart from the new vein of humour it opened, its wonderful freshness and its unflagging animal spirits, it has two characters that will probably continue to attract to it an unfading popularity. Its pre-eminent achievement is of course Sam Weller; one of those people that take their place among the supreme successes of fiction, as one that nobody ever saw but everybody recognizes, at once perfectly natural and intensely original. Who is there that has ever thought him tedious? Who is so familiar with him as not still to be finding something new in him? Who is so amazed by his inexhaustible resources, or so amused by his inextinguishable laughter, as to doubt of his being as ordinary and perfect a reality, nevertheless, as anything in the London streets? When indeed the relish has been dulled that makes such humour natural and appreciable, and not his native fun only, his ready and rich illustration, his imperturbable self-possession, but his devotion to his master, his chivalry and his gallantry, are no longer discovered, or believed no longer to exist, in the ranks of life to which he belongs, it will be worse for all of us than for the fame of his creator. Nor, when faith is lost in that possible combination of eccentricities and benevolences, shrewdness and simplicity, good sense and folly, all that suggests the ludicrous and nothing that suggests contempt for it, which form the delightful oddity of Pickwick, will the mistake committed be one merely of critical misjudgment. But of this there is small fear. Sam Weller and Mr. Pickwick are the Sancho and the Quixote of Londoners, and as little likely to pass away as the old city itself.

Pickwick inferior to later books.

Exception for Sam Weller:

and for Mr. Pickwick.

Dickens was very fond of riding in these early years, and there was no recreation he so much indulged, or with such profit to himself, in the intervals of his hardest work. I was his companion oftener than I could well afford the time for, the distances being great and nothing else to be done for the day; but when a note would unexpectedly arrive while I knew him to be hunted hard

Personal habits.

London: 1837. by one of his printers, telling me he had been sticking to work so closely that he must have rest, and, by way of getting it, proposing we should start together that morning at eleven o'clock for 'a 'fifteen mile ride out, ditto in, and a lunch on the road' with a wind-up of six o'clock dinner in Doughty-street, I could not Riding resist the good fellowship. His notion of finding rest from mental exertion in as much bodily exertion of equal severity, continued with him to the last; taking in the later years what I always thought the too great strain of as many miles in walking as he now took in the saddle, and too often indulging it at night: for, though he was always passionately fond of walking, he observed as yet a moderation in it, even accepting as sufficient my seven or eight miles companionship. 'What a brilliant 'morning for a country walk!' he would write, with not another Walking. word in his dispatch. Or, 'Is it possible that you can't, oughtn't, 'shouldn't, mustn't, *won't* be tempted, this gorgeous day!' Or, 'I start precisely—precisely mind—at half-past one. Come, 'come, *come*, and walk in the green lanes. You will work the 'better for it all the week. COME! I shall expect you.' Or, 'You don't feel disposed, do you, to muffle yourself up, and start 'off with me for a good brisk walk over Hampstead-heath? I 'knows a good 'ous there where we can have a red-hot chop for 'dinner, and a glass of good wine': which led to our first expe- Jack Straw's. rience of Jack Straw's-castle, memorable for many happy meetings in coming years. But the rides were most popular and frequent. 'I think,' he would write, 'Richmond and Twickenham, thro' the 'park, out at Knightsbridge, and over Barnes-common—would 'make a beautiful ride.' Or, 'Do you know, I shouldn't object 'to an early chop at some village inn?' Or, 'Not knowing 'whether my head was off or on, it became so addled with work, Relief after writing. 'I have gone riding the old road, and should be truly delighted 'to meet or be overtaken by you.' Or, 'Where shall it be—*oh* '*where*—Hampstead, Greenwich, Windsor? WHERE? ? ? ? ? ? 'while the day is bright, not when it has dwindled away to 'nothing! For who can be of any use whatsomdever such a day 'as this, excepting out of doors?' Or it might be interrogatory summons to 'A hard trot of three hours?' or intimation as laconic

'To be heard of at Eel-pie-house, Twickenham!' When first I knew him, I may add, his carriage for his wife's use was a small chaise with a smaller pair of ponies, which, having a habit of making sudden rushes up bye-streets in the day and peremptory standstills in ditches by night, were changed in the following year for a more suitable equipage. LONDON: 1837. His ponies.

To this mention of his habits while at work when our friendship began, I have to add what will complete the relation already given, in connection with his *Sketches*, of the uneasy sense accompanying his labour that it was yielding insufficient for himself while it enriched others, which is a needful part of his story at this time. At midsummer 1837, replying to some inquiries, and sending his agreement with Mr. Bentley for the *Miscellany* under which he was writing *Oliver*, he went on: 'It is a very extraordi- 'nary fact (I forgot it on Sunday) that I have NEVER HAD from 'him a copy of the agreement respecting the novel, which I never 'saw before or since I signed it at his house one morning long 'ago. Shall I ask him for a copy or no? I have looked at some 'memoranda I made at the time, and I *fear* he has my second 'novel on the same terms, under the same agreement. This is a 'bad look-out, but we must try and mend it. You will tell me 'you are very much surprised at my doing business in this way. 'So am I, for in most matters of labour and application I am 'punctuality itself. The truth is (though you do not need, I 'should explain the matter to you, my dear fellow) that if I had 'allowed myself to be worried by these things, I could never 'have done as much as I have. But I much fear, in my desire 'to avoid present vexations, I have laid up a bitter store for the 'future.' The second novel, which he had promised in a complete form for a very early date, and had already selected subject and title for, was published four years later as *Barnaby Rudge*; but of the third he at present knew nothing but that he was expected to begin it, if not in the magazine, somewhere or other independently within a specified time. Natural discontents. His early agreements: see *post*, 107. Proposed successor to *Oliver Twist*.

The first appeal made, in taking action upon his letter, had reference to the immediate pressure of the *Barnaby* novel; but it also opened up the question of the great change of circum-

London: 1837.

stances since these various agreements had been precipitately signed by him, the very different situation brought about by the extraordinary increase in the popularity of his writings, and the advantage it would be, to both Mr. Bentley and himself, to make more equitable adjustment of their relations. Some misunderstandings followed, but were closed by a compromise in September 1837; by which the third novel was abandoned* on certain conditions, and *Barnaby* was undertaken to be finished by November 1838. This involved a completion of the new story during the progress of *Oliver*, whatever might be required to follow on the close of *Pickwick;* and I doubted its wisdom. But it was accepted for the time.

Relations with Mr. Bentley.

A compromise.

Trip to Flanders.

He had meanwhile taken his wife abroad for a ten days' summer holiday, accompanied by the shrewd observant young artist, Mr. Hablot Browne, whose admirable illustrations to *Pickwick* had more than supplied Mr. Seymour's loss; and I had a letter from him on their landing at Calais on the 2nd of July.

'We have arranged for a post-coach to take us to Ghent, 'Brussels, Antwerp, and a hundred other places, that I cannot 'recollect now and couldn't spell if I did. We went this after-'noon in a barouche to some gardens where the people dance, 'and where they were footing it most heartily—especially the 'women, who in their short petticoats and light caps look un-'commonly agreeable. A gentleman in a blue surtout and silken 'berlins accompanied us from the hotel, and acted as curator. 'He even waltzed with a very smart lady (just to show us, con-'descendingly, how it ought to be done), and waltzed elegantly 'too. We rang for slippers after we came back, and it turned 'out that this gentleman was the Boots.'

From Calais.

First visit to Broadstairs.

His later sea-side holiday was passed at Broadstairs, as were those of many subsequent years, and the little watering-place has been made memorable by his pleasant sketch of it. From his letters to myself a few lines may be given of his first doings and impressions there.

* I have a memorandum in Dickens's writing that 500*l.* was to have been given for it, and an additional 250*l.* on its sale reaching 3000 copies: but he had no ground of objection to the terms that accompanied its surrender, which were favourable.

Writing on the 3rd of September he reports himself just risen from an attack of illness. 'I am much better, and hope to begin '*Pickwick No.* 18 to-morrow. You will imagine how queer I 'must have been when I tell you that I have been compelled 'for four-and-twenty mortal hours to abstain from porter or other 'malt liquor!!! I done it though—really... I have discovered 'that the landlord of the Albion has delicious hollands (but what 'is that to *you*, for you cannot sympathise with my feelings), and 'that a cobbler who lives opposite to my bed-room window is a 'Roman-catholic, and gives an hour and a half to his devotions 'every morning behind his counter. I have walked upon the 'sands at low-water from this place to Ramsgate, and sat upon 'the same at high-ditto till I have been flayed with the cold. 'I have seen ladies and gentlemen walking upon the earth in 'slippers of buff, and pickling themselves in the sea in complete 'suits of the same. I have seen stout gentlemen looking at 'nothing through powerful telescopes for hours, and, when at 'last they saw a cloud of smoke, fancying a steamer behind it, 'and going home comfortable and happy. I have found out 'that our next neighbour has a wife and something else under 'the same roof with the rest of his furniture—the wife deaf and 'blind, and the something else given to drinking. And if you 'ever get to the end of this letter *you* will find out that I sub-'scribe myself on paper as on everything else (some atonement 'perhaps for its length and absurdity),' &c. &c.

BROADSTAIRS: 1837.

Writing *Pickwick*, No. XVIII.

Seaside experiences.

In his next letter (from 12, High-street, Broadstairs, on the 7th) there is allusion to one of the many piracies of *Pickwick*, which had distinguished itself beyond the rest by a preface abusive of the writer plundered. 'I recollect this "member of the dramatic-'"authors'-society" bringing an action once against Chapman who 'rented the City-theatre, in which it was proved that he had 'undertaken to write under special agreement seven melodramas 'for five pounds, to enable him to do which a room had been 'hired in a gin-shop close by. The defendant's plea was, that 'the plaintiff was always drunk, and had not fulfilled his contract. 'Well; if the *Pickwick* has been the means of putting a few 'shillings in the vermin-eaten pockets of so miserable a creature,

Piracies of *Pickwick*.

A dramatic author.

Broadstairs: 1837.

'and has saved him from a workhouse or a jail, let him empty 'out his little pot of filth and welcome. I am quite content to 'have been the means of relieving him. Besides, he seems to 'have suffered by agreements!'

A sufferer from agreements.

His own troubles in that way were compromised for the time, as already hinted, at the close of this September month; and at the end of the month following, after finishing *Pickwick* and resuming *Oliver*, the latter having been suspended by him during the recent disputes, he made his first visit to Brighton. The opening of his letter of Friday the 3rd of November is full of friendly regrets that I had not joined them there. 'It is a 'beautiful day and we have been taking advantage of it, but 'the wind until to-day has been so high and the weather so 'stormy that Kate has been scarcely able to peep out of doors. 'On Wednesday it blew a perfect hurricane, breaking windows, 'knocking down shutters, carrying people off their legs, blowing 'the fires out, and causing universal consternation. The air was 'for some hours darkened with a shower of black hats (second-'hand) which are supposed to have been blown off the heads of 'unwary passengers in remote parts of the town, and have been 'industriously picked up by the fishermen. Charles Kean was 'advertised for *Othello*, "for the benefit of Mrs. Sefton, having '"most kindly postponed for this one day his departure for '"London." I have not heard whether he got to the theatre, 'but I am sure nobody else did. They do *The Honeymoon* to-'night, on which occasion I mean to patronize the drayma. We 'have a beautiful bay-windowed sitting-room here, fronting the 'sea, but I have seen nothing of B's brother who was to have 'shown me the lions, and my notions of the place are conse-'quently somewhat confined: being limited to the pavilion, the 'chain-pier, and the sea. The last is quite enough for me, and, 'unless I am joined by some male companion (*do you think I 'shall be?*), is most probably all I shall make acquaintance with. 'I am glad you like *Oliver* this month: especially glad that you 'particularize the first chapter. I hope to do great things with 'Nancy. If I can only work out the idea I have formed of her, 'and of the female who is to contrast with her, I think I may

First visit to Brighton.

A storm.

The theatre.

Characters in *Oliver Twist*.

'defy Mr. —— and all his works.* I have had great difficulty BRIGHTON: 1837.
'in keeping my hands off Fagin and the rest of them in the
'evenings; but as I came down for rest, I have resisted the
'temptation, and steadily applied myself to the labour of being
'idle. Did you ever read (of course you have though) Defoe's
'*History of the Devil?* What a capital thing it is! I bought it Reading De Foe.
'for a couple of shillings yesterday morning, and have been quite
'absorbed in it ever since. We must have been jolter-headed
'geniuses not to have anticipated M's reply. My best remem-
'brances to him. I see H at this moment. I must be present
'at a rehearsal of that opera. It will be better than any comedy
'that was ever played. Talking of comedies, I still see NO THO- 'No Thoroughfare.'
'ROUGHFARE staring me in the face, every time I look down that
'road. I have taken places for Tuesday next. We shall be at
'home at six o'clock, and I shall hope at least to see you that
'evening. I am afraid you will find this letter extremely dear
'at eightpence, but if the warmest assurances of friendship and
'attachment, and anxious lookings-forward to the pleasure of your
'society, be worth anything, throw them into the balance, to-
'gether with a hundred good wishes and one hearty assurance
'that I am,' &c. &c. 'CHARLES DICKENS. No room for the
'flourish—I'll finish it the next time I write to you.'

The flourish that accompanied his signature is familiar to every one. The allusion to the comedy expresses a fancy he at this time had of being able to contribute some such achievement in aid of Macready's gallant efforts at Covent-garden to bring back Proposed help to Macready. to the stage its higher associations of good literature and intellectual enjoyment. It connects curiously now that unrealised hope with the exact title of the only story he ever took part himself in dramatizing, and which Mr. Fechter played at the Adelphi three years before his death.

* The allusion was to the supposed author of a paper in the *Quarterly Review* (Oct. 1837), in the course of which there was much high praise, but where the writer said at the close: 'Indications are not wanting that the 'particular vein of humour which has 'hitherto yielded so much attractive 'metal, is worked out. . . . The 'fact is, Mr. Dickens writes too often 'and too fast. . . . If he persists much 'longer in this course, it requires no 'gift of prophecy to foretell his fate— 'he has risen like a rocket, and he 'will come down like the stick.'

II.

BETWEEN PICKWICK AND NICKLEBY.

1837 AND 1838.

London: 1837.

Not remotely bearing on the stage, nevertheless, was the employment on which I found him busy at his return from Brighton; one result of his more satisfactory relations with Mr. Bentley having led to a promise to edit for him a life of the celebrated clown, Grimaldi. The manuscript had been prepared from autobiographical notes by a Mr. Egerton Wilks, and contained one or two stories told so badly, and so well worth better telling, that the hope of enlivening their dulness at the cost of very little labour constituted a sort of attraction for him. Except the preface he did not write a line of this biography, such modifications or additions as he made having been dictated by him to his father; whom I found often in exalted enjoyment of the office of amanuensis. He had also a most indifferent opinion of the mass of material which Mr. Wilks had raked together, describing it as 'twaddle'; and his own modest estimate of the book, on its completion, may be guessed from the number of notes of admiration (no less than thirty) which accompanied his written mention to me of the sale with which it started in the first week of its publication. 'Seventeen hundred *Grimaldis* have been already sold, 'and the demand increases daily!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!'

Edits the *Life of Grimaldi.*

His own opinion of it.

It was not to have all its own way however. A great many critical faults were found; and one point in particular was urged against his handling such a subject, that he could never himself even have seen Grimaldi. To this last objection he was moved to reply, and had prepared a letter for the *Miscellany*, 'from 'editor to sub-editor,' which it was thought best to suppress, but of which the opening remark may now be not unamusing. 'I 'understand that a gentleman unknown is going about this town 'privately informing all ladies and gentlemen of discontented 'natures, that, on a comparison of dates and putting together of 'many little circumstances which occur to his great sagacity, he

An objection to his writing it.

Answered by himself.

'has made the profound discovery that I can never have seen 'Grimaldi whose life I have edited, and that the book must 'therefore of necessity be bad. Now, sir, although I was brought 'up from remote country parts in the dark ages of 1819 and 1820 'to behold the splendour of Christmas pantomimes and the 'humour of Joe, in whose honour I am informed I clapped my 'hands with great precocity, and although I even saw him act 'in the remote times of 1823; yet as I had not then aspired to 'the dignity of a tail-coat, though forced by a relentless parent 'into my first pair of boots, I am willing, with the view of saving 'this honest gentleman further time and trouble, to concede that 'I had not arrived at man's estate when Grimaldi left the stage, 'and that my recollections of his acting are, to my loss, but 'shadowy and imperfect. Which confession I now make pub- 'lickly, and without mental qualification or reserve, to all whom 'it may concern. But the deduction of this pleasant gentleman 'that therefore the Grimaldi book must be bad, I must take 'leave to doubt. I don't think that to edit a man's biography 'from his own notes it is essential you should have known him, 'and I don't believe that Lord Braybrooke had more than the 'very slightest acquaintance with Mr. Pepys whose memoirs 'he edited two centuries after he died.'

LONDON: 1837.

A Life of Grimaldi.

Enormous meanwhile, and without objection audible on any side, had been the success of the completed *Pickwick*, which we celebrated by a dinner, with himself in the chair and Talfourd in the vice-chair, everybody in hearty good humour with every other body; and a copy of which I received from him on the 11th of December in the most luxurious of Hayday's bindings, with a note worth preserving for its closing allusion. The passage referred to in it was a comment, in delicately chosen words, that Leigh Hunt had made on the inscription at the grave in Kensal-green.* 'Chapman and Hall have just sent me, with a copy 'of our deed, three "extra-super" bound copies of *Pickwick*, 'as per specimen inclosed. The first I forward to you, the 'second I have presented to our good friend Ainsworth, and

Completion of *Pickwick*

* See *ante*, p. 77.

London: 1837.

'the third Kate has retained for herself. Accept your copy 'with one sincere and most comprehensive expression of my 'warmest friendship and esteem; and a hearty renewal, if 'there need be any renewal when there has been no inter- 'ruption, of all those assurances of affectionate regard which 'our close friendship and communion for a long time back has 'every day implied .... That beautiful passage you were so kind 'and considerate as to send me, has given me the only feeling 'akin to pleasure (sorrowful pleasure it is) that I have yet had, 'connected with the loss of my dear young friend and companion; 'for whom my love and attachment will never diminish, and by

A purpose long entertained.

'whose side, if it please God to leave me in possession of sense 'to signify my wishes, my bones, whenever or wherever I die, 'will one day be laid. Tell Leigh Hunt when you have an 'opportunity how much he has affected me, and how deeply I 'thank him for what he has done. You cannot say it too 'strongly.'

Relations with Chapman and Hall.

The 'deed' mentioned was one executed in the previous month to restore to him a third ownership in the book which had thus far enriched all concerned but himself. The original understanding respecting it Mr. Edwin Chapman thus describes for me. 'There was no agreement about *Pickwick* except a verbal one. 'Each number was to consist of a sheet and a half, for which we 'were to pay fifteen guineas; and we paid him for the first two 'numbers at once, as he required the money to go and get married 'with. We were also to pay more according to the sale, and 'I think *Pickwick* altogether cost us three thousand pounds.' Adjustment to the sale would have cost four times as much, and of the actual payments I have myself no note; but as far as my memory serves, they are overstated by Mr. Chapman. My impression is, that, above and beyond the first sum due for each of the twenty numbers (making no allowance for their extension after the first to thirty-two pages), successive cheques were given, as the work went steadily on to the enormous sale it reached,

Payments for *Pickwick*.

which brought up the entire sum received to two thousand five hundred pounds. I had however always pressed so strongly the importance to him of some share in the copyright, that this at last

was conceded in the deed above-mentioned, though five years were to elapse before the right should accrue; and it was only yielded as part consideration for a further agreement entered into at the same date (the 19th of November, 1837) whereby Dickens engaged to 'write a new work the title whereof shall be determined 'by him, of a similar character and of the same extent as the '*Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club*,' the first number of which was to be delivered on the fifteenth of the following March, and each of the numbers on the same day of each of the successive nineteen months; which was also to be the date of the payment to him, by Messrs. Chapman and Hall, of twenty several sums of one hundred and fifty pounds each for five years' use of the copyright, the entire ownership in which was then to revert to Dickens. The name of this new book, as all the world knows, was *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby*; and between April 1838 and October 1839 it was begun and finished accordingly.

LONDON: 1837.

Agreement for *Nicholas Nickleby*.

All through the interval of these arrangements *Oliver Twist* had been steadily continued. Month by month, for many months, it had run its opening course with the close of *Pickwick*, as we shall see it close with the opening of *Nickleby*; and the expectations of those who had built most confidently on the young novelist were more than confirmed. Here was the interest of a story simply but well constructed; and characters with the same impress of reality upon them, but more carefully and skilfully drawn. Nothing could be meaner than the subject, the progress of a parish or workhouse boy, nothing less so than its treatment. As each number appeared, his readers generally became more and more conscious of what already, as we have seen, had revealed itself amid even the riotous fun of *Pickwick*, that the purpose was not solely to amuse; and, far more decisively than its predecessor, the new story further showed what were the not least potent elements in the still increasing popularity that was gathering around the writer. His qualities could be appreciated as well as felt in an almost equal degree by all classes of his various readers. Thousands were attracted to him because he placed them in the midst of scenes and characters with which they were already themselves acquainted; and thousands were reading him with no

Going on with *Oliver Twist*.

The story characterized.

Reasons for popularity with every class.

London: 1837.

less avidity because he introduced them to passages of nature and life of which they before knew nothing, but of the truth of which their own habits and senses sufficed to assure them. Only to genius are so revealed the affinities and sympathies of high and low, in regard to the customs and usages of life; and only a writer of the first rank can bear the application of such a test. For it is by the alliance of common habits, quite as much as by the bonds of a common humanity, that we are all of us linked together; and the result of being above the necessity of depending on other people's opinions, and that of being below it, are pretty much the same. It would equally startle both high and low to be conscious of the whole that is implied in this close approximation: but for the common enjoyment of which I speak such consciousness is not required; and for the present Fagin may be left undisturbed in his school of practical ethics with only the Dodger, Charley Bates, and his other promising scholars.

Affinities of High and Low.

With such work as this in hand, it will hardly seem surprising that as the time for beginning *Nickleby* came on, and as he thought of his promise for November, he should have the sense of 'some-thing hanging over him like a hideous nightmare.' He felt that he could not complete the *Barnaby Rudge* novel by the November of that year as promised, and that the engagement he would have to break was unfitting him for engagements he might otherwise fulfil. He had undertaken what in truth was impossible. The labour of at once editing the *Miscellany* and supplying it with monthly portions of *Oliver*, more than occupied all the time left him by other labours absolutely necessary. 'I no sooner get myself up,' he wrote, 'high and dry, to attack *Oliver* manfully, than up come the waves of each month's work, and drive me back again into a sea of manuscript.' There was nothing for it but that he should make farther appeal to Mr. Bentley. 'I have recently,' he wrote to him on the 11th of February, 1838, 'been thinking a great deal about *Barnaby Rudge*. *Grimaldi* has occupied so much of the short interval I had between the completion of the *Pickwick* and the commencement of the new work, that I see it will be wholly impossible for me to produce it by the time I had hoped, with justice to myself or

A nigh mare agreement.

Appeal to Mr. Bentley.

'profit to you. What I wish you to consider is this: would it 'not be far more to your interest, as well as within the scope of 'my ability, if *Barnaby Rudge* began in the *Miscellany* imme- 'diately on the conclusion of *Oliver Twist*, and were continued 'there for the same time, and then published in three volumes? 'Take these simple facts into consideration. If the *Miscellany* is 'to keep its ground, it *must* have some continuous tale from me 'when *Oliver* stops. If I sat down to *Barnaby Rudge*, writing a 'little of it when I could (and with all my other engagements it 'would necessarily be a very long time before I could hope to 'finish it that way), it would be clearly impossible for me to begin 'a new series of papers in the *Miscellany*. The conduct of three 'different stories at the same time, and the production of a large 'portion of each, every month, would have been beyond Scott 'himself. Whereas, having *Barnaby* for the *Miscellany*, we could 'at once supply the gap which the cessation of *Oliver* must create, 'and you would have all the advantage of that prestige in favour 'of the work which is certain to enhance the value of *Oliver* '*Twist* considerably. Just think of this at your leisure. I am 'really anxious to do the best I can for you as well as for myself, 'and in this case the pecuniary advantage must be all on your 'side.' This letter nevertheless, which had also requested an overdue account of the sales of the *Miscellany*, led to differences which were only adjusted after six months' wrangling; and I was party to the understanding then arrived at, by which, among other things, *Barnaby* was placed upon the footing desired, and was to begin when *Oliver* closed.

LONDON: 1838.

Proposes to write *Barnaby* in the *Miscellany*.

Letter to Mr. Bentley.

Result of it.

Of the progress of his *Oliver*, and his habits of writing at the time, it may perhaps be worth giving some additional glimpses from his letters of 1838. 'I was thinking about *Oliver* till dinner 'time yesterday,' he wrote on the 9th of March,* 'and, just as I

Progress of *Oliver Twist*.

* There is an earlier allusion I may quote, from a letter in January, for its mention of a small piece written by him at this time, but not included in his acknowledged writings. 'I am as 'badly off as you. I have not done 'the *Young Gentlemen*, nor written 'the preface to *Grimaldi*, nor thought 'of *Oliver Twist*, or even supplied a 'subject for the plate.' The *Young Gentlemen* was a small book which he wrote as the companion to a similar half-crown volume of *Young Ladies* (not written by him) for

Minor pieces.

London: 1838.

'had fallen upon him tooth and nail, was called away to sit with 'Kate. I did eight slips however, and hope to make them 'fifteen this morning.' Three days before, a daughter had been born to him, who became a god-daughter to me; on which occasion (having closed his announcement with a postscript of 'I can do nothing this morning. What time will you ride? 'The sooner the better, for a good long spell'), we rode out fifteen miles on the great north-road, and, after dining at the Red-lion in Barnet on our way home, distinguished the already memorable day by bringing in both hacks dead lame.

Birth of his eldest daughter.

Celebration of the day.

On that day week, Monday the 13th, after describing himself 'sitting patiently at home waiting for *Oliver Twist* who has not 'yet arrived,' which was his agreeable form of saying that his fancy had fallen into sluggishness that morning, he made remark in as pleasant phrase on some piece of painful news I had sent him, now forgotten. 'I have not yet seen the paper, and you throw 'me into a fever. The comfort is, that all the strange and terrible 'things come uppermost, and that the good and pleasant things 'are mixed up with every moment of our existence so plentifully 'that we scarcely heed them.' At the close of the month Mrs. Dickens was well enough to accompany him to Richmond, for now the time was come to start *Nickleby;* and having been away from town when *Pickwick's* first number came out, he made it a superstition to be absent at many future similar times. The magazine-day of that April month, I remember, fell upon a Saturday, and the previous evening had brought me a peremptory summons: 'Meet me at the Shakespeare on Saturday night at 'eight; order your horse at midnight, and ride back with me:' which was duly complied with. The smallest hour was sounding into the night from St. Paul's before we started, and the night was none of the pleasantest; but we carried news that lightened every part of the road, for the sale of *Nickleby* had reached that day the astonishing number of nearly fifty thousand! I left him working with unusual cheerfulness at *Oliver Twist* when I quitted

First number of *Nicholas Nickleby.*

Its sale.

Messrs. Chapman and Hall. He had before written for them, without his name, *Sunday under Three Heads;* and he added subsequently a volume of *Young Couples.*

the Star and Garter on the next day but one, after celebrating with both friends on the previous evening an anniversary * which concerned us all (their second and my twenty-sixth); and which we kept always in future at the same place, except when they were living out of England, for twenty successive years. It was a part of his love of regularity and order, as well as of his kindliness of nature, to place such friendly meetings as these under rules of habit and continuance.

LONDON: 1838.

2nd of April, 1838.

III.

OLIVER TWIST.

1838.

THE whole of his time not occupied with *Nickleby* was now given to *Oliver*, and as the story shaped itself to its close it took extraordinary hold of him. I never knew him work so frequently after dinner, or to such late hours (a practice he afterwards abhorred), as during the final months of this task; which it was now his hope to complete before October, though its close in the magazine would not be due until the following March. 'I worked pretty well last night,' he writes, referring to it in May, 'very well indeed; but although I did eleven close slips before 'half-past twelve I have four to write to close the chapter; and, 'as I foolishly left them till this morning, have the steam to get 'up afresh.' A month later he writes: 'I got to the sixteenth slip 'last night, and shall try hard to get to the thirtieth before I go to 'bed.' † Then, on a 'Tuesday night' at the opening of August, he wrote: 'Hard at work still. Nancy is no more. I showed 'what I have done to Kate last night, who was in an unspeakable '"*state:*" from which and my own impression I augur well.

Interest in the close of *Oliver Twist*.

Nancy, Sikes, and the Jew.

* See *ante*, p. 70.

† Here is another of the same month: 'All day I have been at work on '*Oliver*, and hope to finish the chapter 'by bed time. I wish you'd let me 'know what Sir Francis Burdett has 'been saying about him at some Bir-'mingham meeting. Blanchard has 'just sent me the *Courier* containing 'some reference to his speech; but 'the speech I haven't seen.'

London: 1838.

'When I have sent Sikes to the devil, I must have yours.' 'No, 'no,' he wrote, in the following month: 'don't, don't let us ride 'till to-morrow, not having yet disposed of the Jew, who is such 'an out and outer that I don't know what to make of him.' No small difficulty to an inventor, where the creatures of his invention are found to be as real as himself; but this also was mastered; and then there remained but the closing quiet chapter to tell the fortunes of those who had figured in the tale. To this he summoned me in the first week of September, replying to a request of mine that he'd give me a call that day. 'Come and give *me* a 'call, and let us have "a bit o' talk" before we have a bit o' 'som'at else. My missis is going out to dinner, and I ought to 'go, but I have got a bad cold. So do you come, and sit here, 'and read, or work, or do something, while I write the LAST 'chapter of *Oliver*, which will be arter a lamb chop.' How well I remember that evening! and our talk of what should be the fate of Charley Bates, on behalf of whom (as indeed for the Dodger too) Talfourd had pleaded as earnestly in mitigation of judgment as ever at the bar for any client he most respected.

The last chapter.

Cruikshank illustrations.

The publication had been announced for October, but the third-volume-illustrations intercepted it a little. This part of the story, as we have seen, had been written in anticipation of the magazine, and the designs for it, having to be executed 'in 'a lump,' were necessarily done somewhat hastily. The matter supplied in advance of the monthly portions in the magazine, formed the bulk of the last volume as published in the book; and for this the plates had to be prepared by Cruikshank also in advance of the magazine, to furnish them in time for the separate publication: Sikes and his dog, Fagin in the cell, and Rose Maylie and Oliver, being the three last. None of these Dickens had seen until he saw them in the book on the eve of its publication; when he so strongly objected to one of them that it had to be cancelled. 'I returned suddenly to town yesterday afternoon,' he wrote to the artist at the end of October, 'to look at the latter 'pages of *Oliver Twist* before it was delivered to the booksellers, 'when I saw the majority of the plates in the last volume for the 'first time. With reference to the last one—Rose Maylie and

Etchings for the last volume.

Letter to Cruikshank.

'Oliver—without entering into the question of great haste, or 'any other cause, which may have led to its being what it is, I 'am quite sure there can be little difference of opinion between us 'with respect to the result. May I ask you whether you will object 'to designing this plate afresh, and doing so *at once*, in order that 'as few impressions as possible of the present one may go forth? 'I feel confident you know me too well to feel hurt by this en-'quiry, and with equal confidence in you I have lost no time in 'preferring it.' This letter, printed from a copy in Dickens's handwriting fortunately committed to my keeping, entirely disposes of a wonderful story* originally promulgated in America, with a minute particularity of detail that might have raised the reputation of Sir Benjamin Backbite himself. Whether all Sir

LONDON: 1838.

Requests an etching to be cancelled.

* Reproduced as below, in large type, and without a word of contradiction or even doubt, in a biography of Mr. Dickens put forth by Mr. Hotten. 'Dr. Shelton McKenzie, in the 'American *Round Table*, relates this 'anecdote of *Oliver Twist:* In Lon-'don I was intimate with the brothers 'Cruikshank, Robert and George, but 'more particularly with the latter. 'Having called upon him one day at 'his house (it was then in Myddelton-'terrace, Pentonville), I had to wait 'while he was finishing an etching, 'for which a printer's boy was wait-'ing. To while away the time, I 'gladly complied with his suggestion 'that I should look over a portfolio 'crowded with etchings, proofs, and 'drawings, which lay upon the sofa. 'Among these, carelessly tied together 'in a wrap of brown paper, was a 'series of some twenty-five or thirty 'drawings, very carefully finished, 'through most of which were carried 'the well-known portraits of Fagin, 'Bill Sikes and his dog, Nancy, the 'Artful Dodger, and Master Charles 'Bates—all well known to the readers 'of *Oliver Twist*. There was no mis-'take about it; and when Cruikshank 'turned round, his work finished, I 'said as much. He told me that it 'had long been in his mind to show 'the life of a London thief by a series 'of drawings engraved by himself, in 'which, without a single line of letter-'press, the story would be strikingly 'and clearly told. "Dickens," he 'continued, "dropped in here one day, '"just as you have done, and, while '"waiting until I could speak with '"him, took up that identical port-'"folio, and ferreted out that bundle '"of drawings. When he came to '"that one which represents Fagin '"in the condemned cell, he studied '"it for half an hour, and told me '"that he was tempted to change '"the whole plot of his story; not to '"carry Oliver Twist through ad-'"ventures in the country, but to '"take him up into the thieves' den '"in London, show what their life '"was, and bring Oliver through it '"without sin or shame. I con-'"sented to let him write up to as '"many of the designs as he thought '"would suit his purpose; and that '"was the way in which Fagin, '"Sikes, and Nancy were created. '"My drawings suggested them, '"rather than his strong individuality '"suggested my drawings."'

A marvellous fable.

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London: 1838.

A false statement exposed.

Benjamin's laurels however should fall to the person by whom the tale is told,* or whether any part belongs to the authority alleged for it, is unfortunately not quite clear. There would hardly have been a doubt, if the fable had been confined to the other side of the Atlantic; but it has been reproduced and widely circulated on this side also, and the distinguished artist whom it calumniates by attributing the invention to him has been left undefended from its slander. Dickens's letter spares me the necessity of characterizing, by the only word which would have been applicable to it, a tale of such incredible and monstrous absurdity as that one of the masterpieces of its author's genius had been merely an illustration of etchings by Mr. Cruikshank!

Reputation of *Oliver Twist.*

The completed *Oliver Twist* found a circle of admirers, not wide in its range as those of others of his books, but of a charact and mark that made their honest liking for it, and steady a vocacy of it, important to his fame; and the story has held i ground in the first class of his writings. It deserves that plac The admitted exaggerations in *Pickwick* are incident to its club' extravaganza of adventure, of which they are part, and are easil separable from the reality of its wit and humour, and its incom parable freshness; but no such allowances were needed here Make what deduction the too scrupulous reader of *Oliver* migh please for 'lowness' in the subject, the precision and the un exaggerated force of the delineation were not to be disputed. The

Copying from nature.

art of copying from nature as it really exists in the common walks, had not been carried by any one to greater perfection, or to better results in the way of combination. Such was his handling of the piece of solid, existing, everyday life, which he made here the groundwork of his wit and tenderness, that the book which

Authorship of the fable.

* This question has been partly solved, since I drew attention to it, by Mr. Cruikshank's announcement in the *Times*, that, though Dr. Mackenzie had 'confused some circumstances 'with respect to Mr. Dickens looking 'over some drawings and sketches,' the substance of his information as to who it was that originated *Oliver Twist*, and all its characters, had been derived from Mr. Cruikshank himself. The worst part of the foregoing fable, therefore, has not Dr. Mackenzie for its author; and Mr. Cruikshank is to be congratulated on the prudence of his rigid silence respecting it as long as Mr. Dickens lived. For a fac-simile of the letter quoted in the text, see post, Book VI. § 2.

did much to help out of the world the social evils it pourtrayed, will probably preserve longest the picture of them as they then were. Thus far indeed he had written nothing to which in a greater or less degree this felicity did not belong. At the time of which I am speaking, the debtors' prisons described in *Pickwick*, the parochial management denounced in *Oliver*, and the Yorkshire schools exposed in *Nickleby*, were all actual existences; which now have no vivider existence than in the forms he thus gave to them. With wiser purposes, he superseded the old petrifying process of the magician in the Arabian tale, and struck the prisons and parish practices of his country, and its schools of neglect and crime, into palpable life for ever. A portion of the truth of the past, of the character and very history of the moral abuses of his time, will thus remain always in his writings; and it will be remembered that with only the light arms of humour and laughter, and the gentle ones of pathos and sadness, he carried cleansing and reform into those Augean stables.

LONDON: 1838.

Social evils passed away.

Augean stables cleansed.

Not that such intentions are in any degree ever intruded by this least didactic of writers. It is the fact that teaches, and not any sermonizing drawn from it. *Oliver Twist* is the history of a child born in a workhouse and brought up by parish overseers, and there is nothing introduced that is out of keeping with the design. It is a series of pictures from the tragi-comedy of lower life worked out by perfectly natural agencies, from the dying mother and the starved wretches of the first volume, through the scenes and gradations of crime, careless or deliberate, which have a frightful consummation in the last volume, but are never without the reliefs and self-assertions of humanity even in scenes and among characters so debased. It is indeed the primary purpose of the tale to show its little hero, jostled as he is in the miserable crowd, preserved everywhere from the vice of its pollution by an exquisite delicacy of natural sentiment which clings to him under every disadvantage. There is not a more masterly touch in fiction (and it is by such that this delightful fancy is consistently worked out to the last) than Oliver's agony of childish grief on being brought away from the branch-workhouse, the wretched home associated

Chief design of the story.

London: 1838.

only with suffering and starvation, and with no kind word or look, but containing still his little companions in misery.

Its principal figures.

Of the figures the book has made familiar to every one it is not my purpose to speak. To name one or two will be enough. Bumble and his wife; Charley Bates and the Artful Dodger; the cowardly charity boy, Noah Claypole, whose *Such agony please sir* puts a school-life into a single phrase; the so-called merry Jew, supple and blackhearted Fagin; and Bill Sikes, the bold-faced bulky-legged ruffian, with his white hat and white shag dog,—who does not know them all, even to the least points, dress, look, and walk, and all the small peculiarities that express great points of character? I have omitted poor wretched Nancy. yet it is to be said of her, with such honest truthfulness the strength and weakness are shown, in the virtue that lies neighboured in her nature so closely by vice, that the people meant to entirely virtuous show poorly beside her. But, though Rose and her lover are trivial enough beside Bill and his mistress, being indeed the weak part of the story, it is the book's pre-eminent merit that vice is no where made attractive in it. Crime is not more intensely odious, all through, than it is also most unhappy. Not merely when its exposure comes, when guilt's latent recesses are laid bare, and the agonies of remorse are witnessed; not in the great scenes only, but in lighter and apparently careless passages; this is emphatically so. Terror and retribution do closely at the heels both of the comedy and the tragedy of crime. They are as plainly visible when Fagin is first shown in his den boiling the coffee in the saucepan and stopping every now and then to listen when there is the least noise below,—the villainous confidence of habit never extinguishing in him the anxious watchings and listenings of crime,—as when we see him at the last in the condemned cell, like a poisoned human rat in a hole.

Nancy.

Rose and her lover.

The comedy and tragedy of crime.

Reply to attacks.

A word may be added upon the attacks directed against the subject of the book, to which Dickens made reply in one of his later editions; declaring his belief that he had tried to do a service to society, and had certainly done no disservice, in depicting a knot of such associates in crime in all their deformity and squalid wretchedness, skulking uneasily through a miserable life to a

painful and shameful death. It is indeed never the subject that can be objectionable, if the treatment is not so, as we may see by much popular writing since, where subjects unimpeachably high are brought low by degrading sensualism. When the object of a writer is to exhibit the vulgarity of vice, and not its pretensions to heroism or cravings for sympathy, he may measure his subject with the highest. Swindlers and thieves are our associates in *Gil Blas;* we shake hands with highwaymen and house-breakers all round in the *Beggars' Opera;* we pack cards with La Ruse or pick pockets with Jonathan in Fielding's *Mr. Wild the Great;* cruelty and vice attend us in the prints of Hogarth; but our morals stand none the looser for any of them. As the spirit of the Frenchman was pure enjoyment, the strength of the Englishmen lay in wisdom and satire. The low was set forth to pull down the false pretensions of the high. They differ in design from Dickens, because they desire less to discover the soul of goodness in things evil than to brand the stamp of evil on things apt to pass for good, but their objects and results are substantially the same. Familiar with the lowest kind of abasement of life, the knowledge is used, by both him and them, to teach what constitutes its essential elevation; and by the very coarseness and vulgarity of the materials employed, we measure the gentlemanliness and beauty of the work that is done. The quack in morality will always call such writing immoral, and the impostors will continue to complain of its treatment of imposture; but for the rest of the world it will teach still the invaluable lesson of what men ought to be from what they are. We cannot learn it more than enough. We cannot too often be told that as the pride and grandeur of mere external circumstance is the falsest of earthly things, so the truth of virtue in the heart is the most lovely and lasting; and from the pages of *Oliver Twist* this teaching is once again to be taken by all who will look for it there.

LONDON: 1838.

High and low.

Le Sage, Gay, and Fielding:

likeness to them.

The superficial and the true.

And now, while *Oliver* was running a great career of popularity and success, the shadow of the tale of *Barnaby Rudge* which he was to write on similar terms, and to begin in the *Miscellany* when the other should have ended, began to darken everything around him. We had much discussion respecting it, and I had no small

Again the shadow of *Barnaby Rudge.*

London: 1838. difficulty in restraining him from throwing up the agreement altogether; but the real hardship of his position, and the considerate construction to be placed on every effort made by him to escape from obligations incurred in ignorance of the sacrifices implied by them, will be best understood from his own frank statement. On the 21st of January 1839, enclosing me the copy of a letter which he proposed to send to Mr. Bentley the following morning, he thus wrote. 'From what I have already said to you, 'you will have been led to expect that I entertained some such 'intention. I know you will not endeavour to dissuade me from 'sending it. Go it MUST. It is no fiction to say that at present 'I *cannot* write this tale. The immense profits which *Oliver* [illegible] 'realized to its publisher and is still realizing; the pal[illegible] 'wretched, miserable sum it brought to me (not equal to what 'every day paid for a novel that sells fifteen hundred copies 'most); the recollection of this, and the consciousness that 'have still the slavery and drudgery of another work on the sa[illegible] 'journeyman-terms; the consciousness that my books are 'riching everybody connected with them but myself, and that 'with such a popularity as I have acquired, am struggling in 'toils, and wasting my energies in the very height and fres 'ness of my fame, and the best part of my life, to fill the pock 'of others, while for those who are nearest and dearest to me I 'can realize little more than a genteel subsistence: all this puts 'me out of heart and spirits: and I cannot—cannot and will 'not—under such circumstances that keep me down with an iron 'hand, distress myself by beginning this tale until I have had 'time to breathe; and until the intervention of the summer, and 'some cheerful days in the country, shall have restored me to a 'more genial and composed state of feeling. There—for six 'months *Barnaby Rudge* stands over. And but for you, it should 'stand over altogether. For I do most solemnly declare that 'morally, before God and man, I hold myself released from such 'hard bargains as these, after I have done so much for those who 'drove them. This net that has been wound about me, so chafes 'me, so exasperates and irritates my mind, that to break it at what-'ever cost—*that* I should care nothing for—is my constant

21st Jan. 1839.

An old story.

Proposed delay of *Barnaby*.

'impulse. But I have not yielded to it. I merely declare that I 'must have a postponement very common in all literary agree- 'ments; and for the time I have mentioned—six months from the 'conclusion of *Oliver* in the *Miscellany*—I wash my hands of any 'fresh accumulation of labour, and resolve to proceed as cheerfully 'as I can with that which already presses upon me.'* LONDON: 1838.

To describe what followed upon this is not necessary. It will suffice to state the results. Upon the appearance in the *Miscellany*, in the early months of 1839, of the last portion of *Oliver Twist*, its author, having been relieved altogether from his engagement to the magazine, handed over, in a familiar epistle from a parent to his child, the editorship to Mr. Ainsworth; and the still subsisting agreement to write *Barnaby Rudge* was, upon the overture of Mr. Bentley himself in June of the following year, 1840, also put an end to, on payment by Dickens, for the copyright of *Oliver Twist* and such printed stock as remained of the edition then on hand, of two thousand two hundred and fifty pounds. What was farther incident to this transaction will be told hereafter; and a few words may meanwhile be taken, not without significance in regard to it, from the parent's familiar epistle. It describes the child as aged two years and two months (so long had he watched over it); gives sundry pieces of advice concerning its circulation, and the importance thereto of light and pleasant articles of food; and concludes, after some general moralizing on the shiftings and changes of this world having taken so wonderful

Resignation of the *Miscellany*.

Barnaby given up by Mr. Bentley.

Parent's epistle to the child.

* Upon receiving this letter I gently reminded him that I had made objection at the time to the arrangement on the failure of which he empowered me to bring about the settlement it was now proposed to supersede. I cannot give his reply, as it would be unbecoming to repeat the warmth of its expression to myself, but I preserve its first few lines to guard against any possible future misstatement. 'If you 'suppose that anything in my letter 'could by the utmost latitude of con- 'struction imply the smallest dissatis- 'faction on my part, for God's sake 'dismiss such a thought from your 'mind. I have never had a momen- 'tary approach to doubt or discontent 'where you have been mediating for 'me. . . . I could say more, but you 'would think me foolish and rhapso- 'dical; and such feeling as I have for 'you is better kept within one's own 'breast than vented in imperfect and 'inexpressive words.' In a later passage of this biography (Book VIII. § 5), I have supplied, what I felt to be an omission here, something of the other side of the case, from the view which Mr. Bentley probably took, and was entitled to think himself justified in taking.

London: 1838.

a turn that mail-coach guards were become no longer judges of horse-flesh: 'I reap no gain or profit by parting from you, nor 'will any conveyance of your property be required, for in this 'respect you have always been literally Bentley's Miscellany and 'never mine.'

IV.

NICHOLAS NICKLEBY.

1838 and 1839.

London: 1838-9.

Doubts of *Nickleby*:

I well recollect the doubt there was, mixed with the eager expectation which the announcement of his second serial story had awakened, whether the event would justify all that interest, and if indeed it were possible that the young writer could continue to walk steadily under the burthen of the popularity laid upon him. The first number dispersed this cloud of a question in a burst of sunshine; and as much of the gaiety of nations as had been eclipsed by old Mr. Pickwick's voluntary exile to Dulwich, was restored by the cheerful confidence with which young Mr. Nicholas Nickleby stepped into his shoes. Everything that had given charm to the first book was here, with more attention to the important requisite of a story, and more wealth as well as truth of character.

Dispelled.

How this was poured forth in each successive number, it hardly needs that I should tell. To recall it now, is to talk of what since has so interwoven itself with common speech and thought, as to have become almost part of the daily life of us all. It was well said of him, soon after his death, in mentioning how largely his compositions had furnished one of the chief sources of intellectual enjoyment to this generation, that his language had become part of the language of every class and rank of his countrymen, and his characters were a portion of our contemporaries. 'It seems 'scarcely possible,' continued this otherwise not too indulgent commentator, 'to believe that there never were any such persons 'as Mr. Pickwick and Mrs. Nickleby and Mrs. Gamp. They are 'to us not only types of English life, but types actually existing.

'They at once revealed the existence of such people, and made 'them thoroughly comprehensible. They were not studies of 'persons, but persons. And yet they were idealized in the sense 'that the reader did not think that they were drawn from the life. 'They were alive; they were themselves.' The writer might have added that this is proper to all true masters of fiction who work in the higher regions of their calling. LONDON: 1838-9. Idealization of the real.

Nothing certainly could express better what the new book was at this time making manifest to its thousands of readers; not simply an astonishing variety in the creations of character, but what it was that made these creations so real; not merely the writer's wealth of genius, but the secret and form of his art. There never was any one who had less need to talk about his characters, because never were characters so surely revealed by themselves; and it was thus their reality made itself felt at once. They talked so well that everybody took to repeating what they said, as the writer just quoted has pointed out; and the sayings being the constituent elements of the characters, these also of themselves became part of the public. This, which must always be a novelist's highest achievement, was the art carried to exquisite perfection on a more limited stage by Miss Austen; and, under widely different conditions both of art and work, it was pre-eminently that of Dickens. I told him, on reading the first dialogue of Mrs. Nickleby and Miss Knag, that he had been lately reading Miss Bates in *Emma*, but I found that he had not at this time made the acquaintance of that fine writer. Characters self-revealed. Miss Bates and Mrs. Nickleby.

Who that recollects the numbers of *Nickleby* as they appeared can have forgotten how each number added to the general enjoyment? All that had given *Pickwick* its vast popularity, the overflowing mirth, hearty exuberance of humour, and genial kindliness of satire, had here the advantage of a better laid design, more connected incidents, and greater precision of character. Everybody seemed immediately to know the Nickleby family as well as his own. Dotheboys, with all that rendered it, like a piece by Hogarth, both ludicrous and terrible, became a household word. Successive groups of Mantalinis, Kenwigses, Crummleses, introduced each its little world of reality, lighted up everywhere with Dotheboys.

London: 1838-9.

truth and life, with capital observation, the quaintest drollery, and quite boundless mirth and fun. The brothers Cheeryble brought with them all the charities. With Smike came the first of those pathetic pictures that filled the world with pity for what cruelty, ignorance, or neglect may inflict upon the young. And Newman Noggs ushered in that class of the creatures of his fancy in which he took himself perhaps the most delight, and which the oftener he dealt with the more he seemed to know how to vary

Smike and Newman Noggs.

A favourite type of character.

render attractive; gentlemen by nature, however shocking their hats or ungenteel their dialects; philosophers of modest durance, and needy but most respectable coats; a sort of hu angels of sympathy and self-denial, though without a particle splendour or even good looks about them, except what an ey fine as their own feelings might discern. 'My friends,' wr Sydney Smith, describing to Dickens the anxiety of some la of his acquaintance to meet him at dinner, 'have not the smallest 'objection to be put into a number, but on the contrary would be 'proud of the distinction; and Lady Charlotte, in particular, you 'may marry to Newman Noggs.' Lady Charlotte was not a more real person to Sydney than Newman Noggs; and all the world whom Dickens attracted to his books could draw from them the same advantage as the man of wit and genius. It has been lately objected that humanity is not seen in them in its highest or noblest types, and the assertion may hereafter be worth considering; but what is very certain is, that they have inculcated humanity in familiar and engaging forms to thousands and tens of thousands of their readers, who can hardly have failed each to make his little world around him somewhat the better for their teaching. From first to last they were never for a moment alien to either the sympathies or the understandings of any class; and there were crowds of people at this time that could not have told you what imagination meant, who were adding month by month to their limited stores the boundless gains of imagination.

Sydney Smith to Dickens.

See Book X. § 8.

One other kindliest product of humour in *Nickleby*, not to be passed over in even thus briefly recalling a few first impressions of it, was the good little miniature painter Miss La Creevy, living by herself, overflowing with affections she has no one to enrich by, but

Miss La Creevy.

always cheerful by dint of industry and good heartedness. When she is disappointed in the character of a woman she has been to see, she eases her mind by saying a very cutting thing, at her expense *in a soliloquy*: and thereby illustrates one of the advantages of having lived alone so long, that she always made a confidant of herself; was as sarcastic as she could be, by herself, on people who offended her; pleased herself, and did no harm. Here was one of those touches, made afterwards familiar to the readers of Dickens by innumerable similar fancies, which added affection to their admiration for the writer, and enabled them to anticipate the feeling with which posterity would regard him as indeed the worthy companion of the Goldsmiths and Fieldings. There was a piece of writing, too, within not many pages of it, of which Leigh Hunt exclaimed on reading it that it surpassed the best things of the kind in Smollett that he was able to call to mind. This was the letter of Miss Squeers to Ralph Nickleby, giving him her version of the chastisement inflicted by Nicholas on the schoolmaster. 'My pa requests me to write to you, the doctors 'considering it doubtful whether he will ever recuvver the use of 'his legs which prevents his holding a pen. We are in a state of 'mind beyond everything, and my pa is one mask of brooses both 'blue and green likewise two forms are steepled in his Goar. . . . 'Me and my brother were then the victims of his feury since 'which we have suffered very much which leads us to the arrow-'ing belief that we have received some injury in our insides, 'especially as no marks of violence are visible externally. I am 'screaming out loud all the time I write and so is my brother 'which takes off my attention rather and I hope will excuse 'mistakes' . . . .

LONDON: 1838-9.

Advantage of living by oneself.

Remark of Leigh Hunt.

Miss Squeers.

Thus rapidly may be indicated some elements that contributed to the sudden and astonishingly wide popularity of these books. I purposely reserve from my present notices of them, which are biographical rather than critical, any statement of the reasons for which I think them inferior in imagination and fancy to some of the later works; but there was increasing and steady growth in them on the side of humour, observation, and character, while freshness and raciness of style continued to be an important help.

Early and later books.

LONDON: 1838-9.

There are faults of occasional exaggeration in the writing, none that do not spring from animal spirits and good humour, pardonable excess, here and there, on the side of earnest and it has the rare virtue, whether gay or grave, of being thoroughly intelligible and for the most part thoroughly natur suiting itself without effort to every change of mood, as qu warm, and comprehensive, as the sympathies it is taxed to expr

Character of the writing.

The tone also is excellent. We are never repelled by egotism conceit, and misplaced ridicule never disgusts us. When good going on, we are sure to see all the beauty of it; and when th is evil, we are in no danger of mistaking it for good. No can paint more picturesquely by an apposite epithet, or illust more happily by a choice allusion. Whatever he knows or fe too, is always at his fingers' ends, and is present through wh ever he is doing. What Rebecca says to Ivanhoe of the bl knight's mode of fighting would not be wholly inapplicable Dickens's manner of writing. 'There is more than mere strengt 'there seems as if the whole soul and spirit of the champion we 'given to every blow he deals.' This, when a man deals blows with a pen, is the sort of handling that freshens with life the oldest facts, and breathes into thoughts the most fami

Pictures of London.

an emotion not felt before. There seemed to be not much add to our knowledge of London until his books came upon u but each in this respect outstripped the other in its marvels. I *Nickleby* the old city reappears under every aspect; and whethe warmth and light are playing over what is good and cheerful in i or the veil is uplifted from its darker scenes, it is at all times ou privilege to see and feel it as it absolutely is. Its interior hidde life becomes familiar as its commonest outward forms, and we discover that we hardly knew anything of the places we supposed that we knew the best.

Materials gathered in Yorkshire.

Of such notices as his letters give of his progress with *Nickleby*, which occupied him from February 1838 to October 1839, something may now be said. Soon after the agreement for it was signed, before the Christmas of 1837 was over, he went down into Yorkshire with Mr. Hablot Browne to look up the Cheap Schools in that county to which public attention had been pain-

fully drawn by a law case in the previous year; which had before been notorious for cruelties committed in them, whereof he had heard as early as in his childish days;* and which he was bent upon destroying if he could. I soon heard the result of his journey; and the substance of that letter, returned to him for the purpose, is in his preface to the story written for the collected edition. He came back confirmed in his design, and in February set to work upon his first chapter. On his birthday he wrote to me: 'I *have* begun! I wrote four slips last night, so you see the beginning is made. And what is more, I can go on: so I hope the book is in training at last.' 'The first chapter of *Nicholas* is done,' he wrote two days later. 'It took time, but I think answers the purpose as well as it could.' Then, after a dozen days more: 'I wrote twenty slips of *Nicholas* yesterday, left only four to do this morning (up at 8 o'clock too!), and have ordered my horse at one.' I joined him as he expected, and we read together at dinner that day the first number of *Nicholas Nickleby*.

LONDON: 1838-9.

Beginning the book: 7 Feb., 1838.

In the following number there was a difficulty which it was marvellous should not oftener have occurred to him in this form of publication. 'I could not write a line till three o'clock,' he says, describing the close of that number, 'and have yet five slips 'to finish, and don't know what to put in them, for I have reached 'the point I meant to leave off with.' He found easy remedy for such a miscalculation at his outset, and it was nearly his last as well as first misadventure of the kind: his constant difficulty in *Pickwick*, as he said repeatedly, having been not the running short but the running over: not the whip but the drag that was wanted. Sufflaminandus erat, as Ben Jonson said of Shakespeare. And in future works, with such marvellous nicety could he do always what he had planned, strictly within the space available, that I can only remember two other similar instances. The third

A difficulty at starting.

See *post*, Books V. § 7, VI. § 2, XI. § 2.

* 'I cannot call to mind now how 'I came to hear about Yorkshire 'schools when I was a not very robust 'child, sitting in bye-places near 'Rochester-castle, with a head full of 'Partridge, Strap, Tom Pipes, and 'Sancho Panza; but I know that my 'first impressions of them were picked 'up at that time.'

London: 1838-9.

number introduced the school; and 'I remain dissatisfied until 'you have seen and read number three,' was his way of announcing to me his own satisfaction with that first handling of Dotheboys-hall. Nor had it the least part in my admiration of his powers at this time, that he never wrote without the printer at his heels; that, always in his latest works two or three numbers in advance, he was never a single number in advance with this story; that the more urgent the call upon him the more readily he rose to it; and that his astonishing animal spirits never failed him. As late as the 20th in the November month of 1838, he thus wrote to me: 'I have just begun my second chapter; cannot go out to-night; 'must get on; think there *will* be a *Nickleby* at the end of this 'month now (I doubted it before); and want to make a start 'towards it if I possibly can.' That was on Tuesday; and on Friday morning in the same week, explaining the sudden failure of something that had been promised the previous day, he says: 'I was writing incessantly until it was time to dress; and have 'not yet got the subject of my last chapter, which *must be* finished 'to-night.'

Never in advance with *Nickleby*.

A theatrical adaptation.

But this was not all. Between that Tuesday and Friday an indecent assault had been committed on his book by a theatrical adapter named Stirling, who seized upon it without leave while yet only a third of it was written; hacked, cut, and garbled its dialogue to the shape of one or two favourite actors; invented for it a plot and an ending of his own, and produced it at the Adelphi; where the outraged author, hard pressed as he was with an unfinished number, had seen it in the interval between the two letters I have quoted. He would not have run such a risk in later years, but he threw off lightly at present even such offences to his art; and though I was with him at a representation of his *Oliver Twist* the following month at the Surrey-theatre, when in the middle of the first scene he laid himself down upon the floor in a corner of the box and never rose from it until the drop-scene fell, he had been able to sit through *Nickleby*, and to see a merit in parts of the representation. Mr. Yates had a sufficiently humorous meaning in his wildest extravagance, and Mr. O. Smith could put into his queer angular oddities enough of a hard dry pathos, to

Enjoying a day.

conjure up shadows at least of Mantalini and Newman Noggs; of Ralph Nickleby there was only a wig, a spencer, and a pair of boots, but a quaint actor named Wilkinson proved equal to the drollery though not to the fierce brutality of Squeers; and even Dickens, in the letter that amazed me by telling me of his visit to the theatre, was able to praise 'the skilful management and dressing of the boys, the capital manner and speech of Fanny Squeers, the dramatic representation of her card-party in Squeers's parlour, the careful making-up of all the people, and the exceedingly good tableaux formed from Browne's sketches . . . Mrs. Keeley's first appearance beside the fire (see wollum), and all the rest of Smike, was excellent; bating sundry choice sentiments and rubbish regarding the little robins in the fields which have been put in the boy's mouth by Mr. Stirling the adapter.' His toleration could hardly be extended to the robins, and their author he properly punished by introducing and denouncing him at Mr. Crummles's farewell supper.

LONDON: 1838-9. Actors of *Nickleby*.

The story was well in hand at the next letter to be quoted, for I limit myself to those only with allusions that are characteristic or illustrative. 'I must be alone in my glory to-day,' he wrote, 'and see what I can do. I perpetrated a great amount of work yesterday, and have every day indeed since Monday, but I must buckle-to again and endeavour to get the steam up. If this were to go on long, I should "bust" the boiler. I think Mrs. Nickleby's love-scene will come out rather unique.' The steam doubtless rose dangerously high when such happy inspiration came. It was but a few numbers earlier than this, while that eccentric lady was imparting her confidences to Miss Knag, that Sydney Smith confessed himself vanquished by a humour against which his own had long striven to hold out. '*Nickleby* is *very good*,' he wrote to Sir George Phillips after the sixth number. 'I stood out against Mr. Dickens as long as I could, but he has conquered me.'*

Writing Mrs. Nickleby's love-scene.

Sydney Smith vanquished.

The close of the story was written at Broadstairs, from which

* Moore in his *Diary* (April 1837) describes Sydney crying down Dickens at a dinner in the Row, 'and evidently without having given him a fair trial.'

Broadstairs: 1839.

(he had taken a house 'two doors from the Albion-hotel, where 'we had that merry night two years ago') he wrote to me on the 9th September 1839. 'I am hard at it, but these windings up 'wind slowly, and I shall think I have done great things if I have 'entirely finished by the 20th. Chapman and Hall came down 'yesterday with Browne's sketches, and dined here. They im- 'parted their intentions as to a Nicklebeian fête which will make 'you laugh heartily—so I reserve them till you come. It has 'been blowing great guns for the last three days, and last night '(I wish you could have seen it!) there was such a sea! I 'staggered down to the pier, and, creeping under the lee of a 'large boat which was high and dry, watched it breaking for 'nearly an hour. Of course I came back wet through.' On the afternoon of Wednesday the 18th he wrote again. 'I shall not 'finish entirely before Friday, sending Hicks the last twenty pages 'of manuscript by the night coach. I have had pretty stiff work 'as you may suppose, and I have taken great pains. The dis- 'covery is made, Ralph is dead, the loves have come all right, 'Tim Linkinwater has proposed, and I have now only to break up 'Dotheboys and the book together. I am very anxious that you 'should see this conclusion before it leaves my hands, and I 'plainly see therefore that I must come to town myself on 'Saturday if I would not endanger the appearance of the 'number. So I have written to Hicks to send proofs to your 'chambers as soon as he can that evening; and if you don't 'object I will dine with you any time after five, and we will 'devote the night to a careful reading. I have not written to 'Macready, for they have not yet sent me the title page of 'dedication, which is merely "To W. C. Macready Esq. the '"following pages are inscribed, as a slight token of admiration '"and regard, by his friend the Author." Meanwhile will you 'let him know that I have fixed the Nickleby dinner for Saturday 'the 5th of October. Place, the Albion in Aldersgate-street. 'Time, six for half-past exactly. . . . I shall be more glad than I 'can tell you to see you again, and I look forward to Saturday, and 'the evenings that are to follow it, with most joyful anticipation. 'I have had a good notion for *Barnaby*, of which more anon.'

Seaside experiences.

Close of *Nickleby*.

A proposed celebration.

Maclise R.A. C.H. Jeens.

CHARLES DICKENS.

Outline of

THE PAINTING BY MACLISE (1839)

BROADSTAIRS: 1839.

The shadow from the old quarter, we see, the unwritten *Barnaby* tale, intrudes itself still; though hardly, as of old, making other pleasanter anticipations less joyful. Such indeed at this time was his buoyancy of spirit that it cost him little, compared with the suffering it gave him at subsequent similar times, to separate from the people who for twenty months had been a part of himself. The increased success they had achieved left no present room but for gladness and well-won pride; and so, to welcome them into the immortal family of the English novel, and open cheerily to their author 'fresh woods and pastures 'new,' we had the dinner-celebration. But there is small need now to speak of what has left, to one of the few survivors, only the sadness of remembering that all who made the happiness of it are passed away. There was Talfourd, facile and fluent of kindliest speech, with whom we were in constant and cordial intercourse, and to whom, grateful for his copyright exertions in the house of commons, he had dedicated *Pickwick;* there was Maclise, dear and familiar friend to us both, whose lately painted portrait of Dickens hung in the room;* and there was the painter of the Rent-day, who made a speech as good as his pictures, rich in colour and quaint with homely allusion, all about the reality of Dickens's genius, and how there had been nothing like him issuing his novels part by part since Richardson issued his novels volume by volume, and how in both cases people talked about the characters as if they were next-door neighbours or friends, and how as many letters were written to the author of *Nickleby*

Parting from creatures of his fancy.

The Nickleby dinner.

Sir David Wilkie.

* This portrait was given to Dickens by his publishers, for whom it was painted with a view to an engraving for *Nickleby*, which however was poorly executed, and of a size too small to do the original any kind of justice. To the courtesy of its present possessor, the Rev. Sir Edward Repps Jodrell, and to the careful art of Mr. Robert Graves, A.R.A. I owe the illustration at the opening of this volume, in which the head is for the first time worthily expressed; and by way of helping the reader's fancy to a more complete impression, Maclise having caught as happily the figure as the face, a skilful outline of the painting has been executed for the present page by Mr. Jeens. 'As a likeness,' said Mr. Thackeray of the work, and no higher praise could be given to it, 'it is 'perfectly amazing. A looking-glass 'could not render a better fac-simile. 'We have here the real identical man 'Dickens, the inward as well as the 'outward of him.'

The painting by Maclise.

London: 1838. to implore him not to kill poor Smike as had been sent by young ladies to the author of *Clarissa* to 'save Lovelace's soul alive.' These and others are gone. Of those who survive only three arise to my memory—Macready,* who spoke his sense of the honour done him by the dedication in English as good as his delivery of it, Mr. Edward Chapman, and Mr. Thomas Beard.

V.

DURING AND AFTER NICKLEBY.

1838 and 1839.

Twickenham: 1838. The name of his old gallery-companion may carry me back from the days to which the close of *Nickleby* had led me, to those when it was only beginning. 'This snow will take away the cold 'weather,' he had written, in that birthday-letter of 1838 already quoted, 'and then for Twickenham.' Here a cottage was taken,

Summer visitors. nearly all the summer was passed, and a familiar face there was Mr. Beard's. There, too, with Talfourd and with Thackeray and Jerrold, we had many friendly days; and the social charm of Maclise was seldom wanting. Nor was there anything that exercised a greater fascination over Dickens than the grand enjoyment of idleness, the ready self-abandonment to the luxury of laziness, which we both so laughed at in Maclise, under whose easy swing of indifference, always the most amusing at the most aggravating events and times, we knew that there was artist-work as eager, energy as unwearying, and observation almost as penetrating as Dickens's own. A greater enjoyment than the fellowship of

Daniel Maclise. Maclise at this period it would indeed be difficult to imagine. Dickens hardly saw more than he did, while yet he seemed to be seeing nothing; and the small esteem in which this rare faculty was held by himself, a quaint oddity that in him gave to shrewdness itself an air of Irish simplicity, his unquestionable turn for

* Since, alas, also gone.

literature, and a varied knowledge of books not always connected with such intense love and such unwearied practice of one special and absorbing art, combined to render him attractive far beyond the common. His fine genius and his handsome person, of oeither of which at any time he seemed himself to be in the slightest degree conscious, completed the charm. Edwin Landseer, all the world's favourite, and the excellent Stanfield, came a few months later, in the Devonshire-terrace days; but another painter-friend was George Cattermole, who had then enough and to spare of fun as well as fancy to supply ordinary artists and humourists by the dozen, and wanted only a little more ballast and steadiness to possess all that could give attraction to good fellowship. A friend now especially welcome, also, was the novelist Mr. Ainsworth, who shared with us incessantly for the three following years in the companionship which began at his house; with whom we visited, during two of those years, friends of art and letters in his native Manchester, from among whom Dickens brought away his Brothers Cheeryble; and to whose sympathy in tastes and pursuits, accomplishments in literature, open-hearted generous ways, and cordial hospitality, many of the pleasures of later years were due. Frederick Dickens, to whom soon after this a treasury-clerkship was handsomely given, on Dickens's application, by Mr. Stanley of Alderley, known in and before those Manchester days, was for the present again living with his father, but passed much time in his brother's home; and another familiar face was that of Mr. Thomas Mitton, who had known him when himself a law-clerk in Lincoln's-inn, through whom there was introduction of the relatives of a friend and partner, Mr. Smithson, the gentleman connected with Yorkshire mentioned in his preface to *Nickleby*, who became very intimate in his house. These, his father and mother and their two younger sons, with members of his wife's family, and his married sisters and their husbands, Mr. and Mrs. Burnett and Mr. and Mrs. Austin, are figures that all associate themselves prominently with the days of Doughty-street and the cottages of Twickenham and Petersham as remembered by me in the summers of 1838 and 1839.

TWICKENHAM: 1838.

Other artist associates.

Harrison Ainsworth.

Familiar friends.

Petersham: 1839.

In the former of these years the sports were necessarily quieter* than at Petersham, where extensive garden-grounds admitted of much athletic competition, from the more difficult forms of which I in general modestly retired, but where Dickens for the most part held his own against even such accomplished athletes as Maclise and Mr. Beard. Bar-leaping, bowling, and quoits, were among the games carried on with the greatest ardour; and in sustained energy, or what is called keeping it up, Dickens certainly distanced every competitor. Even the lighter recreations of battledore and bagatelle were pursued with relentless activity; and at such amusements as the Petersham races, in those days rather celebrated, and which he visited daily while they lasted, he worked much harder himself than the running horses did.

Athletic sports.

Writes a farce.

What else his letters of these years enable me to recall that could possess any interest now, may be told in a dozen sentences. He wrote a farce by way of helping the Covent-garden manager which the actors could not agree about, and which he turned afterwards into a story called the *Lamplighter*. He read the piece at the theatre, before the same stage manager to whom he had written to request a very different audience in the same green-room a few years before; and Dickens could not but fancy that into Mr. Bartley's face, as he listened to the humorous reading, there crept some strange bewildered half consciousness that in the famous writer he saw again the youthful would-be

Reads it in green-room. See *ante*, 58.

* We had at Twickenham a balloon club for the children, of which I appear to have been elected president on condition of supplying the balloons, a condition so insufficiently complied with as to have led to the subjoined resolution. The Snodgering Blee and Popem Jee were the little brother and sister, for whom, as for their successors, he was always inventing these surprising descriptive epithets. 'Gammon Lodge, Saturday evening, June 23rd, 1838. Sir, I am requested to inform you that at a numerous meeting of the Gammon Aeronautical Association for the encouragement of Science and the Consumption of Spirits (of Wine)—Thomas Beard, Esquire, Mrs. Charles Dickens, Charles Dickens, Esquire, the Snodgering Blee, Popem Jee, and other distinguished characters being present and assenting, the vote of censure of which I enclose a copy, was unanimously passed upon you for gross negligence in the discharge of your duty, and most unjustifiable disregard of the best interests of the Society. I am, Sir, your most obedient Servant, Charles Dickens, Honorary Secretary. To John Forster, Esquire.'

Childish enjoyments.

actor. He entered his name among the students at the inn of the Middle-temple, though he did not eat dinners there until many years later. We made together a circuit of nearly all the London prisons; and, in coming to the prisoners under remand while going over Newgate, accompanied by Macready and Mr. Hablot Browne,* were startled by a sudden tragic cry of 'My God! 'there's Wainewright!' In the shabby-genteel creature, with sandy disordered hair and dirty moustache, who had turned quickly round with a defiant stare at our entrance, looking at once mean and fierce, and quite capable of the cowardly murders he had committed, Macready had been horrified to recognize a man familiarly known to him in former years, and at whose table he had dined.. Between the completion of *Oliver* and its publication, Dickens went to see something of North Wales; and joining him at Liverpool, I returned with him.† Soon after his arrival he had pleasant communication with Lockhart, dining with him at Cruikshank's a little later; and this was the prelude to a *Quarterly* review of *Oliver* by Mr. Ford, written at the instance of Lockhart but without the raciness he would have put into it, in which amends were made for previous less favourable notice in that review. Dickens had not however waited for this to express publicly his hearty sympathy with Lockhart's handling of some passages in his admirable *Life of Scott* that had drawn down upon him the wrath of the Ballantynes. This he did in the *Examiner;* where also I find him noticing a book by Thomas Hood: 'rather 'poor, but I have not said so, because Hood is too, and ill 'besides.' In the course of the year he was taken into Devonshire to select a home for his father, on the removal of the latter (who had long given up his reporting duties) from his London residence; and this he found in a cottage at Alphington, near

PETERSHAM: 1839.

Entered at the Middle-temple.

Wainewright in Newgate.

The *Quarterly* on *Oliver.*

'Up the Rhine.'

* Not Mr. Procter, as, by an oversight of his own, Dickens caused to be said in an interesting paper on Wainewright which appeared in his weekly periodical.

† I quote from a letter dated Llangollen, Friday morning, 3rd Nov. 1838. 'I wrote to you last night, 'but by mistake the letter has gone on 'Heaven knows where in my port-'manteau. I have only time to say, 'go straight to Liverpool by the first 'Birmingham train on Monday morn-'ing, and at the Adelphi-hotel in that 'town you will find me. I trust to 'you to see my dear Kate, and bring 'the latest intelligence of her and the 'darlings. My best love to them.'

London: 1839.

Exeter, where he placed the elder Dickens with his wife and their youngest son. The same year closed Macready's Covent-garden management; and at the dinner to the retiring manager, when the Duke of Cambridge took the chair, Dickens spoke with that wonderful instinct of knowing what to abstain from saying as well as what to say which made his after-dinner speeches unique. Nor should mention be omitted of the Shakespeare-society, now diligently attended, of which Procter, Talfourd, Macready, Thackeray, Henry Davison, Blanchard, Charles Knight, John Bell, Douglas Jerrold, Maclise, Stanfield, George Cattermole, Charles and Tom Landseer, Frank Stone, and other old friends were members, and where, out of much enjoyment and many disputings,* there arose, from Dickens and all of us, plenty of after-dinner oratory. The closing months of this year of 1839 had special interest for him. At the end of October another daughter was born to him, who bears the name of that dear friend of his and mine, Macready, whom he asked to be her godfather; and before the close of the year he had moved out of Doughty-street into Devonshire terrace, a handsome house with a garden of considerable size, shut out from the New-road by a high brick wall facing the York gate into Regent's-park. These various matters, and his attempts at the *Barnaby* novel on the conclusion of *Nickleby*, are the subjects of his letters between October and December.

After-dinner speeches.

Second daughter born.

House-hunting.

'Thank God, all goes famously. I have worked at *Barnaby* 'all day, and moreover seen a beautiful (and reasonable) house 'in Kent-terrace, where Macready once lived, but larger than his.'

* One of these disputes is referred to by Charles Knight in his Autobiography; and I see in Dickens's letters the mention of another in which I seem to have been turned by his kindly counsel from some folly about to be committed. 'I need not, I am 'sure, impress upon you the sincerity 'with which I make this representa-'tion. Our close and hearty friend-'ship happily spares me the necessity. 'But I will add this—that feeling for 'you an attachment which no ties of 'blood or other relationship could 'ever awaken, and hoping to be to 'the end of my life your affectionate 'and chosen friend, I am convinced 'that I counsel you now as you would 'counsel me if I were in the like case; 'and I hope and trust that you will be 'led by an opinion which I am sure 'cannot be wrong when it is influenced 'by such feelings as I bear towards 'you, and so many warm and grateful 'considerations.'

Again (this having gone off): '*Barnaby* has suffered so much 'from the house-hunting, that I mustn't chop to-day.' Then (for the matter of the Middle Temple) 'I return the form. It's the 'right Temple, I take for granted. *Barnaby* moves, not at race- 'horse speed, but yet as fast (I think) as under these unsettled 'circumstances could possibly be expected.' Or again: 'All 'well. *Barnaby* has reached his tenth page. I have just turned 'lazy, and have passed into *Christabel*, and thence to *Wal-* '*lenstein*.' At last the choice was made. 'A house of great 'promise (and great premium), "undeniable" situation and ex- 'cessive splendour, is in view. Mitton is in treaty, and I am in 'ecstatic restlessness. Kate wants to know whether you have any 'books to send her, so please to shoot here any literary rubbish 'on hand.' To these I will only add a couple of extracts from his letters while in Exeter arranging his father's and mother's new home. They are pleasantly written; and the vividness with which everything, once seen, was photographed in his mind and memory, is humorously shown in them.

LONDON: 1839.

Working slowly.

Devonshire-terrace in prospect.

'I took a little house for them this morning' (5th March, 1839: from the New London Inn), 'and if they are not pleased with it 'I shall be grievously disappointed. Exactly a mile beyond the 'city on the Plymouth road there are two white cottages: one is 'theirs and the other belongs to their landlady. I almost forget 'the number of rooms; but there is an excellent parlour with two 'other rooms on the ground floor, there is really a beautiful little 'room over the parlour which I am furnishing as a drawing-room, 'and there is a splendid garden. The paint and paper throughout 'is new and fresh and cheerful-looking, the place is clean beyond 'all description, and the neighbourhood I suppose the most beau- 'tiful in this most beautiful of English counties. Of the landlady, 'a Devonshire widow with whom I had the honour of taking lunch 'to-day, I must make most especial mention. She is a fat, infirm, 'splendidly-fresh-faced country dame, rising sixty and recovering 'from an attack "on the nerves"—I thought they never went off 'the stones, but I find they try country air with the best of us. 'In the event of my mother's being ill at any time, I really think 'the vicinity of this good dame, the very picture of respectability

At Exeter.

Home for his father and mother.

Exeter: 1839.

'and good humour, will be the greatest possible comfort. *Her* 'furniture and domestic arrangements are a capital picture, but 'that I reserve till I see you, when I anticipate a hearty laugh. 'She bears the highest character with the bankers and the clergy- 'man (who formerly lived in *my* cottage himself), and is a kind- 'hearted worthy capital specimen of the sort of life, or I have no 'eye for the real and no idea of finding it out.

A landlady and her friends.

'This good lady's brother and his wife live in the next nearest 'cottage, and the brother transacts the good lady's business, the 'nerves not admitting of her transacting it herself, although they 'leave her in her debilitated state something sharper than the 'finest lancet. Now the brother, having coughed all night till he 'coughed himself into such a perspiration that you might have '"wringed his hair," according to the asseveration of eye wit- 'nesses, his wife was sent for to negociate with me; and if you 'could have seen me sitting in the kitchen with the two old women, 'endeavouring to make them comprehend that I had no evil 'intentions or covert designs, and that I had come down all that 'way to take some cottage and had *happened* to walk down that 'road and see that particular one, you would never have forgotten 'it. Then, to see the servant girl run backwards and forwards to

Signing agreements.

'the sick man, and when the sick man had signed one agreement 'which I drew up and the old woman instantly put away in a dis- 'used tea-caddy, to see the trouble and the number of messages 'it took before the sick man could be brought to sign another (a 'duplicate) that we might have one apiece, was one of the richest 'scraps of genuine drollery I ever saw in all my days. How, 'when the business was over, we became conversational; how I 'was facetious, and at the same time virtuous and domestic; how

Autobiographical.

'I drank toasts in the beer, and stated on interrogatory that I was 'a married man and the father of two blessed infants; how the 'ladies marvelled thereat; how one of the ladies, having been in 'London, enquired where I lived, and, being told, remembered 'that Doughty-street and the Foundling-hospital were in the 'Old-Kent-road, which I didn't contradict—all this and a great 'deal more must make us laugh when I return, as it makes me 'laugh now to think of. Of my subsequent visit to the up-

'holsterer recommended by the landlady; of the absence of the 'upholsterer's wife, and the timidity of the upholsterer fearful of 'acting in her absence; of my sitting behind a high desk in a 'little dark shop, calling over the articles in requisition and 'checking off the prices as the upholsterer exhibited the goods and 'called them out; of my coming over the upholsterer's daughter 'with many virtuous endearments, to propitiate the establishment 'and reduce the bill; of these matters I say nothing, either, for 'the same reason as that just mentioned. The discovery of the 'cottage I seriously regard as a blessing (not to speak it pro- 'fanely) upon our efforts in this cause. I had heard nothing from 'the bank, and walked straight there, by some strange impulse, 'directly after breakfast. I am sure they may be happy there; 'for if I were older, and my course of activity were run, I am sure 'I could, with God's blessing, for many and many a year.' . . .

EXETER 1839.

Visit *to* an upholsterer.

'The theatre is open here, and Charles Kean is to-night play- 'ing for his last night. If it had been the "rig'lar" drama I 'should have gone, but I was afraid Sir Giles Overreach might 'upset me, so I stayed away. My quarters are excellent, and the 'head waiter is *such* a waiter! Knowles (not Sheridan Knowles, 'but Knowles of the Cheetham-hill-road*) is an ass to him. 'This sounds bold, but truth is stranger than fiction. By the bye, 'not the least comical thing that has occurred was the visit of the 'upholsterer (with some further calculations) since I began this 'letter. I think they took me here at the New-London for the 'Wonderful Being I am; they were amazingly sedulous; and no 'doubt they looked for my being visited by the nobility and 'gentry of the neighbourhood. My first and only visitor came 'to-night: A ruddy-faced man in faded black, with extracts from 'a feather-bed all over him; an extraordinary and quite miracu- 'lously dirty face; a thick stick; and the personal appearance 'altogether of an amiable bailiff in a green old age. I have not 'seen the proper waiter since, and more than suspect I shall not

The theatre.

Visit *from* an upholsterer.

* This was the butler of Mr. Gilbert Winter, one of the kind Manchester friends whose hospitality we had enjoyed with Mr. Ainsworth, and whose shrewd, quaint, old-world ways come delightfully back to me as I write his once well-known and widely honoured name.

Exeter: 1839.

Dignity in danger.

'recover this blow. He was announced (by *the* waiter) as a '"person." I expect my bill every minute. . . . .

'The waiter is laughing ouside the door with another waiter—this is the latest intelligence of my condition.'

VI.

NEW LITERARY PROJECT.

1839.

Petersham: 1839.

THE time was now come for him seriously to busy himself with a successor to *Pickwick* and *Nickleby*, which he had not however waited thus long before turning over thoroughly in his mind. *Nickleby's* success had so far outgone even the expectation raised by *Pickwick's*, that, without some handsome practical admission of this fact at the close, its publishers could hardly hope to retain him. This had been frequently discussed by us, and was well understood. But, apart from the question of his resuming with them at all, he had persuaded himself it might be unsafe to resume in the old way, believing the public likely to tire of the same twenty numbers over again. There was also another and more sufficient reason for change, which naturally had great weight with him; and this was the hope, that, by invention of a new mode as well as kind of serial publication, he might be able for a time to discontinue the writing of a long story with all its strain on his fancy, or in any case to shorten and vary the length of the stories written by himself, and perhaps ultimately to retain all the profits of a continuous publication without necessarily himself contributing every line that was to be written for it. These considerations had been discussed still more anxiously; and for several months some such project had been taking form in his thoughts.

Thoughts for the future.

While he was at Petersham (July 1839) he thus wrote to me. 'I have been thinking that subject over. Indeed I have been 'doing so to the great stoppage of *Nickleby* and the great worry-

'ing and fidgetting of myself. I have been thinking that if Chap- PETERSHAM: 1839.
'man and Hall were to admit you into their confidence with
'respect to what they mean to do at the conclusion of *Nickleby*,
'without admitting me, it would help us very much. You know Suggestion for his publishers.
'that I am well-disposed towards them, and that if they do
'something handsome, even handsomer perhaps than they dreamt
'of doing, they will find it their interest, and will find me
'tractable. You know also that I have had straightforward
'offers from responsible men to publish anything for me at a
'per-centage on the profits, and take all the risk; but that I
'am unwilling to leave them, and have declared to you that if
'they behave with liberality to me I will not on any considera-
'tion, although to a certain extent I certainly and surely must
'gain by it. Knowing all this, I feel sure that if you were to Mediation with them.
'put before them the glories of our new project, and, reminding
'them that when *Barnaby* is published I am clear of all engage-
'ments, were to tell them that if they wish to secure me and
'perpetuate our connection Now is the time for them to step
'gallantly forward and make such proposals as will produce that
'result—I feel quite sure that if this should be done by you, as
'you only can do it, the result will be of the most vital import-
'ance to me and mine, and that a great deal may be effected,
'thus, to recompense your friend for very small profits and very
'large work as yet. I shall see you, please God, on Tuesday
'night; and if they wait upon you on Wednesday, I shall remain
'in town until that evening.'

They came; and the tenor of the interview was so favourable that I wished him to put in writing what from time to time had been discussed in connection with the new project. This led to the very interesting letter I shall now quote, written also in the same month from Petersham. I did not remember, until I lately read it, that the notion of a possible visit to America had been in his thoughts so early.

'I should be willing to commence on the thirty-first of March,
'1840, a new publication consisting entirely of original matter,
'of which one number price threepence should be published every Proposed weekly publication.
'week, and of which a certain amount of numbers should form

Peters-ham: 1839.

'a volume, to be published at regular intervals. The best general 'idea of the plan of the work might be given perhaps by refer- 'ence to the *Tatler*, the *Spectator*, and Goldsmith's *Bee;* but it 'would be far more popular both in the subjects of which it 'treats and its mode of treating them.

Old favourites.

'I should propose to start, as the *Spectator* does, with some 'pleasant fiction relative to the origin of the publication; to 'introduce a little club or knot of characters and to carry their 'personal histories and proceedings through the work; to intro- 'duce fresh characters constantly; to reintroduce Mr. Pickwick 'and Sam Weller, the latter of whom might furnish an occasional 'communication with great effect; to write amusing essays on 'the various foibles of the day as they arise; to take advantage 'of all passing events; and to vary the form of the papers by 'throwing them into sketches, essays, tales, adventures, letters 'from imaginary correspondents and so forth, so as to diversify 'the contents as much as possible.

'In addition to this general design, I may add that under 'particular heads I should strive to establish certain features in 'the work, which should be so many veins of interest and

Chapters on Chambers.

'amusement running through the whole. Thus the Chapters 'on Chambers which I have long thought and spoken of, might 'be very well incorporated with it; and a series of papers has 'occurred to me containing stories and descriptions of London 'as it was many years ago, as it is now, and as it will be many 'years hence, to which I would give some such title as The

Relaxations of Gog and Magog.

'Relaxations of Gog and Magog, dividing them into portions 'like the *Arabian Nights*, and supposing Gog and Magog to 'entertain each other with such narrations in Guildhall all night 'long, and to break off every morning at daylight. An almost 'inexhaustible field of fun, raillery, and interest, would be laid 'open by pursuing this idea.

'I would also commence, and continue from time to time, a 'series of satirical papers purporting to be translated from some

Savage Chronicles.

'Savage Chronicles, and to describe the administration of justice 'in some country that never existed, and record the proceedings 'of its wise men. The object of this series (which if I can

'compare it with anything would be something between *Gulliver's* PETERSHAM: 1839.
'*Travels* and the *Citizen of the World*) would be to keep a special
'look-out upon the magistrates in town and country, and never
'to leave those worthies alone.

'The quantity of each number that should be written by myself
'would be a matter for discussion and arrangement. Of course
'I should pledge and bind myself upon that head. Nobody Others as well as himself to write.
'but myself would ever pursue *these ideas*, but I must have
'assistance of course, and there must be some contents of a
'different kind. Their general nature might be agreed upon
'beforehand, but I should stipulate that this assistance is chosen
'solely by me, and that the contents of every number are as
'much under my own control, and subject to as little interference,
'as those of a number of *Pickwick* or *Nickleby*.

'In order to give fresh novelty and interest to this under-
'taking, I should be ready to contract to go at any specified
'time (say in the midsummer or autumn of the year, when a
'sufficient quantity of matter in advance should have been pre-
'pared, or earlier if it were thought fit) either to Ireland or to Visits to Ireland or America.
'America, and to write from thence a series of papers descriptive
'of the places and people I see, introducing local tales, traditions,
'and legends, something after the plan of Washington Irving's
'*Alhambra*. I should wish the republication of these papers in
'a separate form, with others to render the subject complete
'(if we should deem it advisable), to form part of the arrange-
'ment for the work; and I should wish the same provision to
'be made for the republication of the Gog and Magog series,
'or indeed any that I undertook.

'This is a very rough and slight outline of the project I have
'in view. I am ready to talk the matter over, to give any further
'explanations, to consider any suggestions, or to go into the
'details of the subject immediately. I say nothing of the novelty
'of such a publication now-a-days or its chances of success. Of
'course I think them great, very great; indeed, almost beyond
'calculation, or I should not seek to bind myself to anything so
'extensive.

'The heads of the terms upon which I should be prepared to

PETERSHAM: 1839.

'go into the undertaking would be—That I be made a proprietor 'in the work and a sharer in the profits. That when I bind

To have a property in the work.

'myself to write a certain portion of every number, I am ensured, '*for* that writing in every number, a certain sum of money. That 'those who assist me, and contribute the remainder of every 'number, shall be paid by the publishers immediately after its 'appearance, according to a scale to be calculated and agreed 'upon, on presenting my order for the amount to which they 'may be respectively entitled. Or, if the publishers prefer it,

Money payments.

'that they agree to pay me a certain sum for the *whole* of every 'number, and leave me to make such arrangements for that part 'which I may not write, as I think best. Of course I should 'require that for these payments, or any other outlay connected 'with the work, I am not held accountable in any way; and 'that no portion of them is to be considered as received by me 'on account of the profits. I need not add that some arrange-'ment would have to be made, if I undertake my Travels, relative 'to the expenses of travelling.

'Now I want our publishing friends to take these things into 'consideration, and to give me the views and proposals they 'would be disposed to entertain when they have maturely con-'sidered the matter.'

The result of their consideration was on the whole satisfactory. An additional fifteen hundred pounds was to be paid at the close of *Nickleby*, the new adventure was to be undertaken, and Cattermole was to be joined with Browne as its illustrator. Nor was its plan much modified before starting, though it was felt by us all that, for the opening numbers at least, Dickens would have to be sole contributor; and that, whatever otherwise might be its attraction, or the success of the detached papers proposed by him, some reinforcement of them from time to time, by means of a story with his name continued at reasonable if not regular intervals, would be found absolutely necessary. Without any such planned story, however, the work did actually begin; its course afterwards being determined by circumstances stronger than any project he had formed. The agreement, drawn up in contemplation of a mere miscellany of detached papers or essays,

Weekly publication to be started.

Nothing settled as to story by himself.

and in which no mention of any story appeared, was signed at the end of March; and its terms were such as to place him in his only proper and legitimate position in regard to all such contracts, of being necessarily a gainer in any case, and, in the event of success, the greatest gainer of all concerned in the undertaking. All the risk of every kind was to be undergone by the publishers; and, as part of the expenses to be defrayed by them of each weekly number, he was to receive fifty pounds. Whatever the success or failure, this was always to be paid. The numbers were then to be accounted for separately, and half the realized profits paid to him, the other half going to the publishers; each number being held strictly responsible for itself, and the loss upon it, supposing any, not carried to the general account. The work was to be continued for twelve months certain, with leave to the publishers then to close it; but if they elected to go on, he was himself bound to the enterprise for five years, and the ultimate copyright as well as profit was to be equally divided.

PETERSHAM: 1839.

Terms of agreement.

Six weeks before signature of this agreement, while a title was still undetermined, I had this letter from him. 'I will dine with 'you. I intended to spend the evening in strict meditation (as 'I did last night); but perhaps I had better go out, lest all work 'and no play should make me a dull boy. *I* have a list of 'titles too, but the final title I have determined on—or some-'thing very near it. I have a notion of this old file in the queer 'house, opening the book by an account of himself, and, among 'other peculiarities, of his affection for an old quaint queer-cased 'clock; showing how that when they have sat alone together in 'the long evenings, he has got accustomed to its voice, and come 'to consider it as the voice of a friend; how its striking, in the 'night, has seemed like an assurance to him that it was still a 'cheerful watcher at his chamber-door; and how its very face 'has seemed to have something of welcome in its dusty features, 'and to relax from its grimness when he has looked at it from 'his chimney-corner. Then I mean to tell how that he has kept 'odd manuscripts in the old, deep, dark, silent closet where the 'weights are; and taken them from thence to read (mixing up his

LONDON.

Notion for his hero.

London: 1839.

'enjoyments with some notion of his clock); and how, when 'the club came to be formed, they, by reason of their punctuality 'and his regard for his dumb servant, took their name from it.

A name hit upon.

'And thus I shall call the book either *Old Humphrey's Clock*, or '*Master Humphrey's Clock*; beginning with a woodcut of old 'Humphrey and his clock, and explaining the why and wherefore. 'All Humphrey's own papers will then be dated From my clock-'side, and I have divers thoughts about the best means of intro-'ducing the others. I thought about this all day yesterday and

Sanguine of success.

'all last night till I went to bed. I am sure I can make a good 'thing of this opening, which I have thoroughly warmed up to 'in consequence.'

A few days later: 'I incline rather more to *Master Humphrey's* '*Clock* than *Old Humphrey's*—if so be that there is no danger 'of the Pensive confounding master with a boy.' After two days more: 'I was thinking all yesterday, and have begun at *Master* '*Humphrey* to-day. Then, a week later: 'I have finished the 'first number, but have not been able to do more in the space 'than lead up to the Giants, who are just on the scene.'

VII.

OLD CURIOSITY SHOP.

1840 AND 1841.

Bath: 1840.

A day or two after the date of the last letter quoted, Dickens and his wife, with Maclise and myself, visited Landor in Bath, and it was during three happy days passed together there that the

First thought of Little Nell.

fancy which was shortly to take the form of little Nell first occurred to its author.* But as yet with the intention only of making out

Anecdote from *Life of Landor*.

* I have mentioned the fact in my *Life of Landor*; and to the passage I here add the comment made by Dickens when he read it. 'It was at 'a celebration of his birthday in the 'first of his Bath lodgings, 35 St. 'James's-square, that the fancy which 'took the form of little Nell in the '*Curiosity Shop* first dawned on the 'genius of its creator. No character 'in prose fiction was a greater favourite 'with Landor. He thought that, upon 'her, Juliet might for a moment have 'turned her eyes from Romeo, and

of it a tale of a few chapters. On the 1st of March we returned from Bath; and on the 4th I had this letter: 'If you can manage 'to give me a call in the course of the day or evening, I wish 'you would. I am laboriously turning over in my mind how I 'can best effect the improvement we spoke of last night, which I 'will certainly make by hook or by crook, and which I would like 'you to see *before* it goes finally to the printer's. I have determined 'not to put that witch-story into number 3, for I am by no means 'satisfied of the effect of its contrast with Humphrey. I think of 'lengthening Humphrey, finishing the description of the society, 'and closing with the little child-story, which is SURE to be 'effective, especially after the old man's quiet way.' Then there came hard upon this: 'What do you think of the following double 'title for the beginning of that little tale? "PERSONAL ADVEN- '"TURES OF MASTER HUMPHREY: *The Old Curiosity Shop.*" I 'have thought of *Master Humphrey's Tale, Master Humphrey's 'Narrative, A Passage in Master Humphrey's Life*—but I don't 'think any does as well as this. I have also thought of *The Old 'Curiosity Dealer and the Child* instead of *The Old Curiosity Shop.* 'Perpend. Topping waits.'——And thus was taking gradual form, with less direct consciousness of design on his own part than I can remember in any other instance throughout his career, a story which was to add largely to his popularity, more than any other of his works to make the bond between himself and his

LONDON 1840.

Hopeful of Master Humphrey.

A title for his story.

'that Desdemona might have taken 'her hair-breadth escapes to heart, so 'interesting and pathetic did she seem 'to him; and when, some years later, 'the circumstance I have named was 'recalled to him, he broke into one of 'those whimsical bursts of comical 'extravagance out of which arose the 'fancy of Boythorn. With tremendous 'emphasis he confirmed the fact, and 'added that he had never in his life 'regretted anything so much as his 'having failed to carry out an inten- 'tion he had formed respecting it; 'for he meant to have purchased that 'house, 35, St. James's-square, and 'then and there to have burnt it to 'the ground, to the end that no meaner 'association should ever desecrate the 'birthplace of Nell. Then he would 'pause a little, become conscious of 'our sense of his absurdity, and break 'into a thundering peal of laughter.' Dickens had himself proposed to tell this story as a contribution to my biography of our common friend, but his departure for America prevented him. 'I see,' he wrote to me, as soon as the published book reached him, 'you 'have told, with what our friend would 'have called *woon*-derful accuracy, 'the little St. James's-square story, 'which a certain faithless wretch was 'to have related.'

9th May, 1869.

London: 1840.

readers one of personal attachment, and very widely to increase the sense entertained of his powers as a pathetic as well as humorous writer.

He had not written more than two or three chapters, when the capability of the subject for more extended treatment than he had at first proposed to give to it pressed itself upon him, and he resolved to throw everything else aside, devoting himself to the one story only. There were other strong reasons for this. Of the first number of the *Clock* nearly seventy thousand were sold; but with the discovery that there was no continuous tale the orders at once diminished, and a change must have been made even if the material and means for it had not been ready. There had been an interval of three numbers between the first and second chapters, which the society of Mr. Pickwick and the two Wellers made pleasant enough; but after the introduction of Dick Swiveller there were three consecutive chapters; and in the continued progress of the tale to its close there were only two more breaks, one between the fourth and fifth chapters and one between the eighth and ninth, pardonable and enjoyable now for the sake of Sam and his father. The re-introduction of those old favourites, it will have been seen, formed part of his original plan; of his abandonment of which his own description may be added, from his preface to the collected edition. 'The first chapter of this tale appeared 'in the fourth number of *Master Humphrey's Clock*, when I had 'already been made uneasy by the desultory character of that 'work, and when, I believe, my readers had thoroughly partici-'pated in the feeling. The commencement of a story was a great 'satisfaction to me, and I had reason to believe that my readers 'participated in this feeling too. Hence, being pledged to some 'interruptions and some pursuit of the original design, I set cheer-'fully about disentangling myself from those impediments as fast 'as I could; and, this done, from that time until its completion '*The Old Curiosity Shop* was written and published from week to 'week, in weekly parts.'

First sale of *Master Humphrey's Clock.*

Its original plan abandoned.

To be limited to one story.

He had very early himself become greatly taken with it. 'I 'am very glad indeed,' he wrote to me after the first half-dozen chapters, 'that you think so well of the *Curiosity Shop*, and

'especially that what may be got out of Dick strikes you. I *mean* 'to make much of him. I feel the story extremely myself, which I 'take to be a good sign; and am already warmly interested in it. 'I shall run it on now for four whole numbers together, to give it 'a fair chance.' Every step lightened the road, as it became more and more real with each character that appeared in it; and I still recall the glee with which he told me what he intended to do not only with Dick Swiveller, but with Septimus Brass, changed afterwards to Sampson. Undoubtedly, however, Dick was his favourite. 'Dick's behaviour in the matter of Miss Wackles will, 'I hope, give you satisfaction,' is the remark of another of his letters. 'I cannot yet discover that his aunt has any belief in 'him, or is in the least degree likely to send him a remittance, so 'that he will probably continue to be the sport of destiny.' His difficulties were the quickly recurring times of publication, the confined space in each number that yet had to contribute its individual effect, and (from the suddenness with which he had begun) the impossibility of getting in advance. 'I was obliged to 'cramp most dreadfully what I thought a pretty idea in the last 'chapter. I hadn't room to turn': to this or a similar effect his complaints are frequent, and of the vexations named it was by far the worst. But he steadily bore up against all, and made a triumph of the little story.

LONDON: 1840. Dick Swiveller. Disadvantages of weekly publication.

To help his work he went twice to Broadstairs, in June and in September; and at his first visit (17th June) thus wrote: 'It's 'now four o'clock and I have been at work since half-past eight. 'I have really dried myself up into a condition which would 'almost justify me in pitching off the cliff, head first—but I must 'get richer before I indulge in a crowning luxury. Number 15, 'which I began to-day, I anticipate great things from. There is 'a description of getting gradually out of town, and passing 'through neighbourhoods of distinct and various characters, with 'which, if I had read it as anybody else's writing, I think I should 'have been very much struck. The child and the old man are 'on their journey of course, and the subject is a very pretty one.' Between the two Broadstairs visits he informed me: 'I intended 'calling on you this morning on my way back from Bevis-marks,

BROADSTAIRS: 17th June. The old man's flight from London. In Bevis-marks.

Broadstairs: 1840.

'whither I went to look at a house for Sampson Brass. But I got 'mingled up in a kind of social paste with the Jews of Hounds-'ditch, and roamed about among them till I came out in Moor-'fields, quite unexpectedly. So I got into a cab, and came home 'again, very tired, by way of the City-road.' At the opening of September he was again at the little watering place. The residence he most desired there, Fort-house, stood prominently at the top of a breezy hill on the road to Kingsgate, with a corn-field between it and the sea, and this in many subsequent years he always occupied; but he was fain to be content, as yet, with Lawn-house, a smaller villa between the hill and the corn-field, from which he now wrote of his attentions to Mr. Sampson Brass's sister. 'I have been at work of course' (2nd September) 'and 'have just finished a number. I have effected a reform by 'virtue of which we breakfast at a quarter before eight, so that I 'get to work at half-past, and am commonly free by one o'clock 'or so, which is a great happiness. Dick is now Sampson's clerk, 'and I have touched Miss Brass in Number 25, lightly, but 'effectively I hope.'

Fort-house.

Sally Brass.

At this point it became necessary to close the first volume of the *Clock*, which was issued accordingly with a dedication to Samuel Rogers, and a preface to which allusion will be made hereafter. 'I have opened the second volume,' he wrote on the 9th of September, 'with Kit; and I saw this morning looking out at 'the sea, as if a veil had been lifted up, an affecting thing that I 'can do with him bye and bye. Nous verrons.' 'I am glad you 'like that Kit number,' he wrote twelve days later, 'I thought you 'would. I have altered that about the opera-going. Of course I 'had no intention to delude the many-headed into a false belief 'concerning opera nights, but merely to specify a class of 'senators. I needn't have done it, however, for God knows 'they're pretty well all alike.' This referred to an objection made by me to something he had written of 'opera-going senators on 'Wednesday nights;' and, of another change made in compliance with some other objection, he wrote on the 4th of October: 'You 'will receive the proof herewith. I have altered it. You must 'let it stand now. I really think the dead mankind a million

Chapter 38.

Changes in proofs.

Chapter 42.

'fathoms deep, the best thing in the sentence. I have a notion of 'the dreadful silence down there, and of the stars shining through 'upon their drowned eyes—the fruit, let me tell you, of a solitary 'walk by starlight on the cliffs. As to the child-image I have 'made a note of it for alteration. In number thirty there will be 'some cutting needed, I think. I have, however, something in 'my eye near the beginning which I can easily take out. You 'will recognize a description of the road we travelled between 'Birmingham and Wolverhampton: but I had conceived it so 'well in my mind that the execution doesn't please me quite as 'well as I expected. I shall be curious to know whether you 'think there's anything in the notion of the man and his furnace-'fire. It would have been a good thing to have opened a new story 'with, I have been thinking since.'

BROADSTAIRS: 1840.

Chapters 43-45.

In the middle of October he returned to town, and by the end of the month he had so far advanced that the close of the story began to be not far distant. 'Tell me what you think,' he had written just before his return, 'of 36 and 37? The way is clear for 'Kit now, and for a great effect at the last with the Marchioness.' The last allusion I could not in the least understand, until I found, in the numbers just sent me, those exquisite chapters of the tale, the 57th and 58th, in which Dick Swiveller realizes his threat to Miss Wackles, discovers the small creature whom his destiny is expressly saving up for him, dubs her Marchioness, and teaches her the delights of hot purl and cribbage. This is comedy of the purest kind; its great charm being the good-hearted fellow's kindness to the poor desolate child hiding itself under cover of what seems only mirth and fun. Altogether, and because of rather than in spite of his weaknesses, Dick is a captivating person. His gaiety and good humour survive such accumulations of 'staggerers,' he makes such discoveries of the 'rosy' in the very smallest of drinks, and becomes himself by his solacements of verse such a 'perpetual grand Apollo,' that his failings are all forgiven; and hearts resolutely shut against victims of destiny in general, open themselves freely to Dick Swiveller.

LONDON.

Dick and the Marchioness.

Masterpiece of kindly fun.

At the opening of November, there seems to have been a wish on Maclise's part to try his hand at an illustration for the story;

London: 1840.

but I do not remember that it bore other fruit than a very pleasant day at Jack Straw's-castle, where Dickens read one of the later numbers to us. 'Maclise and myself (alone in the carriage),' he wrote, 'will be with you at two exactly. We propose driving 'out to Hampstead and walking there, if it don't rain in buckets'-'full. I shan't send Bradburys' the MS of next number till 'to-morrow, for it contains the shadow of the number after that, 'and I want to read it to Mac, as, if he likes the subject, it will 'furnish him with one, I think. You can't imagine (gravely I 'write and speak) how exhausted I am to-day with yesterday's 'labours. I went to bed last night utterly dispirited and done up. 'All night I have been pursued by the child; and this morning I am 'unrefreshed and miserable. I don't know what to do with myself. '. . I think the close of the story will be great.' Connected with the same design on Maclise's part, there was a subsequent reading at my house of the number shadowed forth by what had been read at Hampstead. 'I will bring the MS,' he writes on the 12th of November, 'and, for Mac's information if needful, the number 'before it. I have only this moment put the finishing touch to it. 'The difficulty has been tremendous—the anguish unspeakable. 'I didn't say six. Therefore dine at half-past five like a Christian. 'I shall bring Mac at that hour.'

Closing of the tale.

Effect upon the writer.

He had sent me, shortly before, the chapters in which the Marchioness nurses Dick in his fever, and puts his favourite philosophy to the hard test of asking him whether he has ever put pieces of orange-peel into cold water and made believe it was wine. 'If you make believe very much it's quite nice; but if you 'don't, you know, it hasn't much flavour:' so it stood originally, and to the latter word in the little creature's mouth objection seems to have been made. Replying (on the 16th of December) he writes: '"If you make believe very much it's quite nice; but '"if you don't, you know, it seems as if it would bear a little '"more seasoning, certainly." I think that's better. Flavour is a 'common word in cookery, and among cooks, and so I used it. 'The part you cut out in the other number, which was sent me 'this morning, I had put in with a view to Quilp's last appearance 'on any stage, which is casting its shadow upon my mind; but it

Making-believe very much.

'will come well enough without such a preparation, so I made no 'change. I mean to shirk Sir Robert Inglis, and work to-night. 'I have been solemnly revolving the general story all this morning. 'The forty-fifth number will certainly be the close. Perhaps this 'forty-first which I am now at work on, had better contain the 'announcement of *Barnaby?* I am glad you like Dick and the 'Marchioness in that sixty-fourth chapter—I thought you would.' LONDON: 1840. The end approaching.

Fast shortening as the life of little Nell was now, the dying year might have seen it pass away; but I never knew him wind up any tale with such a sorrowful reluctance as this. He caught at any excuse to hold his hand from it, and stretched to the utmost limit the time left to complete it in. Christmas interposed its delays too, so that twelfth-night had come and gone when I wrote to him in the belief that he was nearly done. 'Done!' he wrote back to me on Friday the 7th, 'done!!! Why bless you, I shall not be 'done till Wednesday night. I only began yesterday, and this 'part of the story is not to be galloped over, I can tell you. I 'think it will come famously—but I am the wretchedest of the 'wretched. It casts the most horrible shadow upon me, and it 'is as much as I can do to keep moving at all. I tremble to 'approach the place a great deal more than Kit; a great deal 'more than Mr. Garland; a great deal more than the Single 'Gentleman. I shan't recover it for a long time. Nobody will 'miss her like I shall. It is such a very painful thing to me, that 'I really cannot express my sorrow. Old wounds bleed afresh 'when I only think of the way of doing it: what the actual doing 'it will be, God knows. I can't preach to myself the school-'master's consolation, though I try. Dear Mary died yesterday, 'when I think of this sad story. I don't know what to say about 'dining to-morrow—perhaps you'll send up to-morrow morning 'for news? That'll be the best way. I have refused several 'invitations for this week and next, determining to go nowhere 'till I had done. I am afraid of disturbing the state I have been 'trying to get into, and having to fetch it all back again.' He had finished, all but the last chapter, on the Wednesday named; that was the 12th of January; and on the following night he read to me the two chapters of Nell's death, the 71st and 72nd, with the 7th Jan. 1841. Death of Little Nell. A personal sorrow.

London: 1841.

result described in a letter of the following Monday, the 17th January, 1841.

17th Jan.

'I can't help letting you know how much your yesterday's letter 'pleased me. I felt sure you liked the chapters when we read 'them on Thursday night, but it was a great delight to have my 'impression so strongly and heartily confirmed. You know how 'little value I should set on what I had done, if all the world 'cried out that it was good, and those whose good opinion and 'approbation I value most were silent. The assurance that this 'little closing of the scene touches and is felt by you so strongly, is 'better to me than a thousand most sweet voices out of doors. 'When I first began, *on your valued suggestion*, to keep my 'thoughts upon this ending of the tale, I resolved to try and do 'something which might be read by people about whom Death 'had been, with a softened feeling, and with consolation. . . After 'you left last night, I took my desk upstairs; and writing until four 'o'clock this morning, finished the old story. It makes me very 'melancholy to think that all these people are lost to me for ever, 'and I feel as if I never could become attached to any new set of 'characters.' The words printed in italics, as underlined by himself, give me my share in the story which had gone so closely to his heart. I was responsible for its tragic ending. He had not thought of killing her, when, about half way through, I asked him to consider whether it did not necessarily belong even to his own conception, after taking so mere a child through such a tragedy of sorrow, to lift her also out of the commonplace of ordinary happy endings, so that the gentle pure little figure and form should never change to the fancy. All that I meant he seized at once, and never turned aside from it again.

The end. 17 Jan. 4 a.m.

A suggestion adopted by him.

Success of the story.

The published book was an extraordinary success, and, in America more especially, very greatly increased the writer's fame. The pathetic vein it had opened was perhaps mainly the cause of this, but opinion at home continued still to turn on the old characteristics; the freshness of humour of which the pathos was but another form or product, the grasp of reality with which character had again been seized, the discernment of good under its least attractive forms and of evil in its most captivating dis-

Its characteristics.

guises, the cordial wisdom and sound heart, the enjoyment and fun, luxuriant yet under proper control. No falling-off was found in these, and I doubt if any of his people have been more widely liked than Dick Swiveller and the Marchioness. The characters generally indeed work out their share in the purpose of the tale; the extravagances of some of them help to intensify its meaning; and the sayings and doings of the worst and the best alike have their point and applicability. Many an over-suspicious person will find advantage in remembering what a too liberal application of Foxey's principle of suspecting everybody brought Mr. Brass to; and many an overhasty judgment of poor human nature will unconsciously be checked, when it is remembered that Mr. Nubbles *did* come back to work out that shilling.

LONDON: 1841.

Useful lessons.

But the main idea and chief figure of the piece constitute its interest for most people, and give it rank upon the whole with the most attractive productions of English fiction. I am not acquainted with any story in the language more adapted to strengthen in the heart what most needs help and encouragement, to sustain kindly and innocent impulses, to awaken everywhere the sleeping germs of good. It includes necessarily much pain, much uninterrupted sadness; but the brightness and the sunshine are not lost in the gloom. The humour is so benevolent; the view of errors that have no depravity in them is so indulgent; the quiet courage under calamity, the purity that nothing impure can soil, are so full of tender teaching. Its effect as a mere piece of art, too, considering the circumstances in which I have shown it to be written, I think noteworthy. It began with a plan for but a short half dozen chapters; it grew into a full-proportioned story under the warmth of the feeling it had inspired its writer with; its very incidents created a necessity at first not seen; and it was carried to a close only contemplated after a full half of it had been written. Yet, from the opening of the tale to that undesigned ending; from the image of little Nell asleep amid the quaint grotesque figures of the old curiosity warehouse, to that other final sleep she takes among the grim forms and carvings of the old church aisle; the main purpose seems to be always present. The characters and

The child-heroine.

Constructed bit by bit.

LONDON: 1841.

Harmony of effect.

incidents that at first appear most foreign to it, are found to have had with it a close relation. The hideous lumber and rottenness that surround the child in her grandfather's home, take shape again in Quilp and his filthy gang. In the first still picture of Nell's innocence in the midst of strange and alien forms, we have the forecast of her after-wanderings, her patient miseries, her sad maturity of experience before its time. Without the show-people and their blended fictions and realities, their wax-works, dwarfs, giants, and performing dogs, the picture would have wanted some part of its significance. Nor could the genius of Hogarth himself have given it higher expression than in the scenes by the cottage door, the furnace fire, and the burial place of the old church, over whose tombs and gravestones hang the puppets of Mr. Punch's show while the exhibitors are mending and repairing them. And when, at last, Nell sits within the quiet old church where all her wanderings end, and gazes on those silent monumental groups of warriors, with helmets, swords, and gauntlets wasting away around them; the associations among which her life had opened seem to have come crowding on the scene again, to be present at its close. But, stripped of their strangeness; deepened into solemn shapes by the suffering she has undergone; gently fusing every feeling of a life past into hopeful and familiar anticipation of a life to come; and already imperceptibly lifting her, without grief or pain, from the earth she loves, yet whose grosser paths her light steps only touched to show the track through them to Heaven. This is genuine art, and such as all cannot fail to recognize who read the book in a right sympathy with the conception that pervades it. Nor, great as the discomfort was of reading it in brief weekly snatches, can I be wholly certain that the discomfort of so writing it involved nothing but disadvantage. With so much in every portion to do, and so little space to do it in, the opportunities to a writer for mere self-indulgence were necessarily rare.

Fitness of means.

Beginning and end.

A recent tribute.

Of the innumerable tributes the story has received, and to none other by Dickens have more or more various been paid, there is one, the very last, which has much affected me. Not many months before my friend's death, he had sent me two *Overland*

Monthlies containing two sketches by a young American writer far away in California, 'The Luck of Roaring Camp,' and 'The 'Outcasts of Poker Flat,' in which he had found such subtle strokes of character as he had not anywhere else in late years discovered; the manner resembling himself, but the matter fresh to a degree that had surprised him; the painting in all respects masterly; and the wild rude thing painted, a quite wonderful reality. I have rarely known him more honestly moved. A few months passed; telegraph wires flashed over the world that he had passed away on the 9th of June; and the young writer of whom he had then written to me, all unconscious of that praise, put his tribute of gratefulness and sorrow into the form of a poem called *Dickens in Camp*.* It embodies the same kind of incident which had so affected the 'master' himself, in the papers to which I have referred; it shows the gentler influences, which, in even those Californian wilds, can restore outlawed 'roaring 'camps' to silence and humanity; and there is hardly any form of posthumous tribute which I can imagine likely to have better satisfied his desire of fame, than one which should thus connect with the special favourite among all his heroines, the restraints and authority exerted by his genius over the rudest and least civilized of competitors in that far fierce race for wealth.

LONDON: 1841.

Sketches sent me by Dickens in 1869:

Verses by the same writer in June 1870.

'Dickens in Camp.'

Above the pines the moon was slowly drifting,
The river sang below;
The dim Sierras, far beyond, uplifting
Their minarets of snow:

The roaring camp-fire, with rude humour, painted
The ruddy tints of health
On haggard face and form that drooped and fainted
In the fierce race for wealth;

Till one arose, and from his pack's scant treasure
A hoarded volume drew,
And cards were dropped from hands of listless leisure
To hear the tale anew;

* *Poems.* By Bret Harte (Boston: Osgood & Co. 1871), pp. 32–5.

'Dickens in Camp.'

And then, while round them shadows gathered faster,
And as the fire-light fell,
He read aloud the book wherein the Master
Had writ of "Little Nell:"

Perhaps 'twas boyish fancy,—for the reader
Was youngest of them all,—
But, as he read, from clustering pine and cedar
A silence seemed to fall;

The fir-trees gathering closer in the shadows,
Listened in every spray,
While the whole camp, with "Nell" on English meadows,
Wandered and lost their way:

And so in mountain solitudes—o'ertaken
As by some spell divine—
Their cares dropped from them like the needles shaken
From out the gusty pine.

Lost is that camp, and wasted all its fire;
And he who wrought that spell?—
Ah, towering pine and stately Kentish spire,
Ye have one tale to tell!

Lost is that camp! but let its fragrant story
Blend with the breath that thrills
With hop-vines' incense all the pensive glory
That fills the Kentish hills.

And on that grave where English oak and holly
And laurel wreaths entwine,
Deem it not all a too presumptuous folly,—
This spray of Western pine!

July, 1870.

VIII.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE AND BROADSTAIRS.

1840.

London: 1840.

A good saying.

It was an excellent saying of the first Lord Shaftesbury, that, seeing every man of any capacity holds within himself two men, the wise and the foolish, each of them ought freely to be allowed his turn; and it was one of the secrets of Dickens's social charm

that he could, in strict accordance with this saying, allow each part of him its turn: could afford thoroughly to give rest and relief to what was serious in him, and, when the time came to play his gambols, could surrender himself wholly to the enjoyment of the time, and become the very genius and embodiment of one of his own most whimsical fancies. LONDON: 1840.

Turning back from the narrative of his last piece of writing to recall a few occurrences of the year during which it had occupied him, I find him at its opening in one of these humorous moods, and another friend, with myself, enslaved by its influence. 'What on earth does it all mean,' wrote poor puzzled Mr. Landor to me, enclosing a letter from him of the date of the 11th of February, the day after the royal nuptials of that year. In this he had related to our old friend a wonderful hallucination arising out of that event, which had then taken entire possession of him. 'Society is unhinged here,' thus ran the letter, 'by her 'majesty's marriage, and I am sorry to add that I have fallen 'hopelessly in love with the Queen, and wander up and down 'with vague and dismal thoughts of running away to some uninhabited island with a maid of honour, to be entrapped by conspiracy for that purpose. Can you suggest any particular young person, serving in such a capacity, who would suit me? It is 'too much perhaps to ask you to join the band of noble youths '(Forster is in it, and Maclise) who are to assist me in this great 'enterprise, but a man of your energy would be invaluable. I 'have my eye upon Lady . . . , principally because she is very 'beautiful and has no strong brothers. Upon this, and other 'points of the scheme, however, we will confer more at large 'when we meet; and meanwhile burn this document, that no 'suspicion may arise or rumour get abroad.' Landor mystified. A mirthful sally of Dickens.

The maid of honour and the uninhabited island were flights of fancy, but the other daring delusion was for a time encouraged to such whimsical lengths, not alone by him but (under his influence) by the two friends named, that it took the wildest forms of humorous extravagance; and of the private confidences much interchanged, as well as of his own style of open speech in which the joke of a despairing unfitness for any farther use or enjoyment Extravagant flights.

London: 1840.

of life was unflaggingly kept up, to the amazement of bystanders knowing nothing of what it meant and believing he had half lost his senses, I permit myself to give from his letters one further illustration. 'I am utterly lost in misery,' he writes on the 12th of February, 'and can do nothing. I have been reading *Oliver*, '*Pickwick*, and *Nickleby* to get my thoughts together for the new 'effort, but all in vain:

'My heart is at Windsor,
'My heart isn't here;
'My heart is at Windsor,
'A following my dear.

Despairing thoughts.

'I saw the Responsibilities this morning, and burst into tears. 'The presence of my wife aggravates me. I loathe my parents. 'I detest my house. I begin to have thoughts of the Serpentine, 'of the Regent's-canal, of the razors upstairs, of the chemist's 'down the street, of poisoning myself at Mrs. ——'s table, of 'hanging myself upon the pear-tree in the garden, of abstaining 'from food and starving myself to death, of being bled for my cold 'and tearing off the bandage, of falling under the feet of cab-horses 'in the New-road, of murdering Chapman and Hall and becoming 'great in story (She must hear something of me then—perhaps 'sign the warrant: or is that a fable?), of turning Chartist, of 'heading some bloody assault upon the palace and saving Her 'by my single hand——of being anything but what I have been, 'and doing anything but what I have done. Your distracted 'friend, C. D.' The wild derangement of asterisks in every shape and form, with which this incoherence closed, cannot be given.

Riding exercise.

Some ailments which dated from an earlier period in his life made themselves felt in the spring of the year, as I remember, and increased horse exercise was strongly recommended to him. 'I find it will be positively necessary to go, for five days in the 'week at least,' he wrote in March, 'on a perfect regimen of 'diet and exercise, and am anxious not to delay treating for a 'horse.' We were now therefore, when he was not at the sea-side, much on horseback in suburban lanes and roads; and the

spacious garden of his new house was also turned to healthful use at even his busiest working times. I mark this, too, as the time when the first of his ravens took up residence; and as the beginning of disputes with two of his neighbours about the smoking of the stable chimney, which his groom Topping, a highly absurd little man with flaming red hair, so complicated by secret devices of his own, meant to conciliate each complainant alternately and having the effect of aggravating both, that law proceedings were only barely avoided. 'I shall give you,' he writes, 'my latest 'report of the chimney in the form of an address from Topping, 'made to me on our way from little Hall's at Norwood the other 'night, where he and Chapman and I had been walking all day, 'while Topping drove Kate, Mrs. Hall, and her sisters, to 'Dulwich. Topping had been regaled upon the premises, and 'was just drunk enough to be confidential. "Beggin' your par-'"don, sir, but the genelman next door sir, seems to be gettin' '"quite comfortable and pleasant about the chim'ley."—"I don't '"think he is, Topping."—"Yes he is sir I think. He comes '"out in the yard this morning and says *Coachman* he says" '(observe the vision of a great large fat man called up by the 'word) "*is that your raven* he says *Coachman? or is it Mr.* '"*Dickens's raven?* he says. My master's sir, I says. *Well*, he '"says, *it's a fine bird. I think the chimley 'ill do now Coachman,* '"*—now the jint's taken off the pipe* he says. I hope it will sir, I '"says; my master's a genelman as wouldn't annoy no genelman '"if he could help it, I'm sure; and my own missis is so afraid '"of havin' a bit o' fire that o' Sundays our little bit o' weal or '"what not, goes to the baker's a purpose.—*Damn the chimley* '"*Coachman*, he says, *it's a smokin' now.*—It a'nt a smokin' your '"way sir, I says; *Well*, he says, *no more it is, Coachman, and as* '"*long as it smokes anybody else's way, it's all right and I'm agree-*'"*able.*" Of course I shall now have the man from the other 'side upon me, and very likely with an action of nuisance for 'smoking into his conservatory.'

LONDON: 1840.

Grip: the first of his ravens.

Groom Topping.

The smoky chimneys.

A graver incident, which occurred to him also among his earliest experiences as tenant of Devonshire-terrace, illustrates too well the practical turn of his kindness and humanity not to

LONDON: 1840.

deserve relation. He has himself described it, in one of his minor writings, in setting down what he remembered as the only good that ever came of a beadle. 'Of that great parish functionary,' he remarks, 'having newly taken the lease of a house in a certain distinguished metropolitan parish, a house which then appeared to me to be a frightfully first-class family mansion involving awful responsibilities, I became the prey.'* In other words he was summoned, and obliged to sit, as juryman at an inquest on the body of a little child alleged to have been murdered by its mother; of which the result was, that, by his persevering exertion, seconded by the humane help of the coroner, Mr. Wakley, the verdict of himself and his fellow-jurymen charged her only with the concealment of birth. 'The poor desolate creature dropped upon her knees before us with protestations that we were right (protestations among the most affecting that I have ever heard in my life), and was carried away insensible. I caused some extra care to be taken of her in the prison, and counsel to be retained for her defence when she was tried at the Old Bailey; and her sentence was lenient, and her history and conduct proved that it was right.' How much he felt the little incident, at the actual time of its occurrence, may be judged from the few lines written next morning: 'Whether it was the poor baby, or its poor mother, or the coffin, or my fellow-jurymen, or what not, I can't say, but last night I had a most violent attack of sickness and indigestion which not only prevented me from sleeping, but even from lying down. Accordingly Kate and I sat up through the dreary watches.'

Juryman at an inquest.

Practical humanity.

The *Clock's* first number.

The day of the first publication of *Master Humphrey* (Saturday, 4th April) had by this time come, and, according to the rule observed in his two other great ventures, he left town with Mrs. Dickens on Friday the 3rd. With Maclise we had been together

* In later days he generally managed to evade such requirements. 'I always pay my taxes,' says a letter from Doughty-street, sent by my friend Mr. Shirley Brooks, 'when they won't call any longer, in order to get a bad name in the parish, and so escape all honours.' There is a touch of character in this, but though his motive in subsequent life was the same, his method was not. He attended punctually to the tax-collector; but of any other parochial or political application took no notice whatever.

at Richmond the previous night; and I joined him at Birmingham the day following with news of the sale of the whole sixty thousand copies to which the first working had been limited, and of orders already in hand for ten thousand more! The excitement of the success somewhat lengthened our holiday; and, after visiting Shakespeare's house at Stratford and Johnson's at Lichfield, we found our resources so straitened in returning, that, employing as our messenger of need his younger brother Alfred, who had joined us from Tamworth where he was a student-engineer, we had to pawn our gold watches at Birmingham.

BIRMINGHAM: 1840.

A holiday.

At the end of the following month he went to Broadstairs, and not many days before (on the 20th of May) a note from Mr. Jerdan on behalf of Mr. Bentley opened the negotiations formerly referred to, which transferred to Messrs. Chapman and Hall the agreement for *Barnaby Rudge*. I was myself absent when he left, and in a letter announcing his departure he had written: 'I don't 'know of a word of news in all London, but there will be plenty 'next week, for I am going away, and I hope you'll send me an 'account of it. I am doubtful whether it will be a murder, a fire, 'a vast robbery, or the escape of Gould, but it will be something 'remarkable no doubt. I almost blame myself for the death of 'that poor girl who leaped off the monument upon my leaving 'town last year. She would not have done it if I had remained, 'neither would the two men have found the skeleton in the sewers.' His prediction was quite accurate, for I had to tell him, after not many days, of the potboy who shot at the queen. 'It's a great 'pity they couldn't suffocate that boy, Master Oxford,' he replied very sensibly, 'and say no more about it. To have put him 'quietly between two feather-beds would have stopped his heroic 'speeches, and dulled the sound of his glory very much. As it 'is, she will have to run the gauntlet of many a fool and madman, 'some of whom may perchance be better shots and use other 'than Brummagem firearms.' How much of this actually came to pass, the reader knows.

BROADSTAIRS.

Transfer of *Barnaby Rudge*.

The pot-boy traitor.

A prediction.

From the letters of his present Broadstairs visit, there is little more to add to the account of his progress with his story; but a sentence may be given for its characteristic expression of his

London: 1840.

invariable habit upon entering any new abode, whether to stay in it for days or for years. On a Monday night he arrived, and on the Tuesday (2nd of June) wrote: 'Before I tasted bit or drop yesterday, I set out my writing-table with extreme taste and neatness, and improved the disposition of the furniture generally.' He stayed till the end of June; when Maclise and myself joined him for the pleasure of posting back home by way of his favourite Chatham, Rochester, and Cobham, where we passed two agreeable days in revisiting well-remembered scenes. Meanwhile there had been brought to a close the treaty for repurchase of *Oliver* and surrender of *Barnaby*, upon terms which are succinctly stated in a letter written by him to Messrs. Chapman and Hall on the 2nd of July, the day after our return.

Habits of order.

Copyright re-purchased.

'The terms upon which you advance the money to-day for the purchase of the copyright and stock* of *Oliver* on my behalf, are understood between us to be these. That this 2250*l.* is to be deducted from the purchase-money of a work by me entitled *Barnaby Rudge*, of which two chapters are now in your hands, and of which the whole is to be written within some convenient time to be agreed upon between us. But if it should not be written (which God forbid!) within five years, you are to have a lien to this amount on the property belonging to me that is now in your hands, namely, my shares in the stock and copyright of *Sketches by Boz*, *The Pickwick Papers*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Oliver Twist*, and *Master Humphrey's Clock*; in which we do not include any share of the current profits of the last-named work, which I shall remain at liberty to draw at the times stated in our agreement.

Barnaby Rudge.

'Your purchase of *Barnaby Rudge* is made upon the following terms. It is to consist of matter sufficient for ten monthly numbers of the size of *Pickwick* and *Nickleby*, which you are however at liberty to divide and publish in fifteen smaller numbers if you think fit. The terms for the purchase of this

* By way of a novelty to help off the stock he had suggested (17th June): 'Would it not be best to print new title-pages to the copies in sheets and publish them as a new edition, with an interesting Preface? I am talking about all this as though the treaty were concluded, but I hope and trust that in effect it is, for negotiation and delay are worse to me than drawn daggers.' See my remark, *ante*, 79.

'edition in numbers, and for the copyright of the whole book for 'six months after the publication of the last number, are 3000*l.* 'At the expiration of the six months the whole copyright reverts to me.' The sequel was, as all the world knows, that Barnaby became successor to little Nell, the money being repaid by the profits of the *Clock;* but I ought also to mention the generous sequel that was given to the small service thus rendered to him, by the gift, after not many days, of an antique silver-mounted jug of great beauty of form and workmanship, and with a wealth far beyond artist's design or jeweller's chasing in written words that accompanied it.* They were accepted to commemorate, not the help they would have far overpaid, but the gladness of his own escape from the last of the agreements that had hampered the opening of his career, and the better future which was now before him.

BROADSTAIRS: 1840.

Escape from bondage.

At the opening of August he was with Mrs. Dickens for some days in Devonshire, on a visit to his father, but he had to take his work with him; and they had only one real holiday, when Dawlish, Teignmouth, Babbicombe, and Torquay were explored, returning to Exeter at night. In the beginning of September he was again at Broadstairs.

'I was just going to work,' he wrote on the 9th, 'when I got this letter, and the story of the man who went to Chapman and 'Hall's knocked me down flat. I wrote until now (a quarter to 'one) against the grain, and have at last given it up for one day. 'Upon my word it is intolerable. I have been grinding my teeth

Published libels about him.

* 'Accept from me' (July 8th, 1840), 'as a slight memorial of your attached 'companion, the poor keepsake which 'accompanies this. My heart is not 'an eloquent one on matters which 'touch it most, but suppose this claret 'jug the urn in which it lies, and 'believe that its warmest and truest 'blood is yours. This was the object 'of my fruitless search, and your curi- 'osity, on Friday. At first I scarcely 'knew what trifle (you will deem it 'valuable, I know, for the giver's 'sake) to send you; but I thought it 'would be pleasant to connect it with 'our jovial moments, and to let it add, 'to the wine we shall drink from it 'together, a flavour which the choicest 'vintage could never impart. Take 'it from my hand—filled to the brim 'and running over with truth and 'earnestness. I have just taken one 'parting look at it, and it seems the 'most elegant thing in the world to 'me, for I lose sight of the vase in 'the crowd of welcome associations 'that are clustering and wreathing 'themselves about it.'

BROADSTAIRS: 1840.

'all the morning. I think I could say in two lines something 'about the general report with propriety. I'll add them to the 'proof' (the preface to the first volume of the *Clock* was at this time in preparation), 'giving you full power to cut them out if 'you should think differently from me, and from C and H, who in 'such a matter must be admitted judges.' He refers here to a report, rather extensively circulated at the time, and which through various channels had reached his publishers, that he was suffering

Stated to be insane.

from loss of reason and was under treatment in an asylum.* I would have withheld it from him, as an absurdity that must quickly be forgotten—but he had been told of it, and there was a difficulty in keeping within judicious bounds his not unnatural wrath.

Other similar reports.

A few days later (the 15th) he wrote: 'I have been rather 'surprised of late to have applications from Roman-catholic 'clergymen, demanding (rather pastorally, and with a kind 'grave authority) assistance, literary employment, and so forth. 'At length it struck me, that, through some channel or other, I 'must have been represented as belonging to that religion. 'Would you believe, that in a letter from Lamert at Cork, to my 'mother, which I saw last night, he says, "What do the papers 'mean by saying that Charles is demented, and further, *that he* '*"has turned Roman-catholic?"*—/' Of the begging-letter-writers, hinted at here, I ought earlier to have said something. In one of his detached essays he has described, without a particle of exaggeration, the extent to which he was made a victim by this class of swindler, and the extravagance of the devices practised on him; but he had not confessed, as he might, that for much of what

Begging-letter-writers.

* Already he had been the subject of similar reports on the occasion of the family sorrow which compelled him to suspend the publication of *Pickwick* for two months (*ante*, 77), when, upon issuing a brief address in resuming his work (30th June, 1837), he said: 'By one set of intimate acquaintances, especially well-informed, 'he has been killed outright; by 'another, driven mad; by a third 'imprisoned for debt; by a fourth, 'sent per steamer to the United 'States; by a fifth, rendered incapable 'of mental exertion for evermore; by 'all, in short, represented as doing 'anything but seeking in a few weeks' 'retirement the restoration of that 'cheerfulness and peace of which a 'sad bereavement had temporarily 'deprived him.'

Penalties of popularity.

he suffered he was himself responsible, by giving so largely, as at first he did, to almost every one who applied to him. What at last brought him to his senses in this respect, I think, was the request made by the adventurer who had exhausted every other expedient, and who desired finally, after describing himself reduced to the condition of a travelling Cheap Jack in the smallest way of crockery, that a donkey might be left out for him next day, which he would duly call for. This I perfectly remember, and I much fear that the applicant was the Daniel Tobin before mentioned.

BROADSTAIRS: 1840.

A donkey asked for.

Ante, 47.

Many and delightful were other letters written from Broadstairs at this date, filled with whimsical talk and humorous description relating chiefly to an eccentric friend who stayed with him most of the time, and is sketched in one of his published papers as Mr. Kindheart; but all too private for reproduction now. He returned in the middle of October, when we resumed our almost daily ridings, foregatherings with Maclise at Hampstead and elsewhere, and social entertainments with Macready, Talfourd, Procter, Stanfield, Fonblanque, Elliotson, Tennent, d'Orsay, Quin, Harness, Wilkie, Edwin Landseer, Rogers, Sydney Smith, and Bulwer. Of the genius of the author of *Pelham* and *Eugene Aram* he had, early and late, the highest admiration, and he took occasion to express it during the present year in a new preface which he published to *Oliver Twist*. Other friends became familiar in later years; but, disinclined as he was to the dinner invitations that reached him from every quarter, all such meetings with those whom I have named, and in an especial manner the marked attentions shown him by Miss Coutts which began with the very beginning of his career, were invariably welcome.

Mr. Kindheart (Angus Fletcher).

Friendly meetings.

To speak here of the pleasure his society afforded, would anticipate the fitter mention to be made hereafter. But what in this respect distinguishes nearly all original men, he possessed eminently. His place was not to be filled up by any other. To the most trivial talk he gave the attraction of his own character. It might be a small matter; something he had read or observed during the day, some quaint odd fancy from a book, a vivid little outdoor picture, the laughing exposure of some imposture, or a

Social talk.

LONDON: 1841.

burst of sheer mirthful enjoyment; but of its kind it would be something unique, because genuinely part of himself. This, and his unwearying animal spirits, made him the most delightful of companions; no claim on good-fellowship ever found him wanting; and no one so constantly recalled to his friends the description Johnson gave of Garrick, as the cheerfullest man of his age.

Of what occupied him in the way of literary labour in the autumn and winter months of the year, some description has been given; and, apart from what has already thus been said of his work at the closing chapters of *The Old Curiosity Shop*, nothing now calls for more special allusion, except that in his town-walks in November, impelled thereto by specimens recently discovered in his country-walks between Broadstairs and Ramsgate, he thoroughly explored the ballad literature of Seven-dials, and would occasionally sing, with an effect that justified his reputation for comic singing in his childhood, not a few of those wonderful productions. His last successful labour of the year was the reconciliation of two friends; and his motive, as well as the principle that guided him, as they are described by himself, I think worth preserving. For the first: 'In the midst of this child's death, I, 'over whom something of the bitterness of death has passed, not 'lightly perhaps, was reminded of many old kindnesses, and was 'sorry in my heart that men who really liked each other should 'waste life at arm's length.' For the last: 'I have laid it down 'as a rule in my judgment of men, to observe narrowly whether 'some (of whom one is disposed to think badly) don't carry all 'their faults upon the surface, and others (of whom one is disposed 'to think well) don't carry many more beneath it. I have long ago 'made sure that our friend is in the first class; and when I know 'all the foibles a man has, with little trouble in the discovery, I 'begin to think he is worth liking.' His latest letter of the year, dated the day following, closed with the hope that we might, he and I, enjoy together 'fifty more Christmases, at least, in this 'world, and eternal summers in another.' Alas!

Ballads of Seven-dials.

Hint for judging men.

IX.

BARNABY RUDGE.

1841.

THE letters of 1841 yield similar fruit as to his doings and sayings, and may in like manner first be consulted for the literary work he had in hand. LONDON: 1841.

He had the advantage of beginning *Barnaby Rudge* ~~with~~ a fair amount of story in advance, which he had only to make suitable, by occasional readjustment of chapters, to publication in weekly portions; and on this he was engaged before the end of January. 'I am at present' (22nd January, 1841) 'in what Leigh Hunt 'would *call* a kind of impossible state—thinking what on earth 'Master Humphrey can think of through four mortal pages. I 'added here and there to the last chapter of the *Curiosity Shop* 'yesterday, and it leaves me only four pages to write.' (They were filled by a paper from Humphrey introductory of the new tale, in which will be found a striking picture of London, from midnight to the break of day.) 'I also made up, and wrote the 'needful insertions for, the second number of *Barnaby*—so that I 'came back to the mill a little.' Hardly yet: for after four days he writes, having meanwhile done nothing: 'I have been looking '(three o'clock) with an appearance of extraordinary interest and 'study at *one leaf* of the *Curiosities of Literature* ever since half- Hard work. 'past ten this morning—I haven't the heart to turn over.' Then, on Friday the 29th, better news came. 'I didn't stir out yesterday, 'but sat and *thought* all day; not writing a line; not so much as 'the cross of a t or dot of an i. I imaged forth a good deal of '*Barnaby* by keeping my mind steadily upon him; and am 'happy to say I have gone to work this morning in good twig, 'strong hope, and cheerful spirits. Last night I was unutterably 'and impossible-to-form-an-idea-of-ably miserable. . . . By the 'bye don't engage yourself otherwise than to me for Sunday week, 'because it's my birthday. I have no doubt we shall have got 'over our troubles here by that time, and I purpose having a snug

LONDON: 1841.

'dinner in the study.' We had the dinner, though the troubles were not over; but the next day another son was born to him.

A fourth child and second son: 8 Feb.

'Thank God,' he wrote on the 9th, 'quite well. I am thinking 'hard, and have just written to Browne enquiring when he will 'come and confer about the raven.' He had by this time resolved to make that bird, whose accomplishments had been daily ripening and enlarging for the last twelve months to the increasing mirth and delight of all of us, a prominent figure in *Barnaby;* and the invitation to the artist was for a conference how best to introduce him graphically.

The raven.

The next letter mentioning *Barnaby* was from Brighton (25th February), whither he had flown for a week's quiet labour. 'I 'have (it's four o'clock) done a very fair morning's work, at which 'I have sat very close, and been blessed besides with a clear view 'of the end of the volume. As the contents of one number 'usually require a day's thought at the very least, and often more, 'this puts me in great spirits. I think—that is, I hope—the story 'takes a great stride at this point, and takes it WELL. Nous 'verrons. Grip will be strong, and I build greatly on the Varden 'household.'

A loss in the family.

Upon his return he had to lament a domestic calamity, which, for its connection with a famous personage in *Barnaby*, must be mentioned here. The raven had for some days been ailing, and Topping had reported of him, as Hamlet declares of himself, that he had lost his mirth and foregone all custom of exercises: but Dickens paid no great heed, remembering his recovery from an illness of the previous summer when he swallowed some white paint; so that the graver report which led him to send for the doctor came upon him unexpectedly, and nothing but his own language can worthily describe the result. Unable from the state of his feelings to write two letters, he sent the narrative to Maclise under an enormous black seal, for transmission to me; and thus it befell that this fortunate bird received a double passport to fame, so great a humourist having celebrated his farewell to the present world, and so great a painter his welcome to another.

Death of the raven: 12 March.

'You will be greatly shocked (the letter is dated Friday evening, 12th of March, 1841) 'and grieved to hear that the Raven

'is no more. He expired to-day at a few minutes after twelve LONDON: 1841.
'o'clock at noon. He had been ailing for a few days, but we
'anticipated no serious result, conjecturing that a portion of the Describes the raven's illness.
'white paint he swallowed last summer might be lingering about
'his vitals without having any serious effect upon his constitution.
'Yesterday afternoon he was taken so much worse that I sent an
'express for the medical gentleman (Mr. Herring), who promptly
'attended, and administered a powerful dose of castor oil. Under
'the influence of this medicine, he recovered so far as to be able
'at eight o'clock p.m. to bite Topping. His night was peaceful.
'This morning at daybreak he appeared better; received (agree-
'ably to the doctor's directions) another dose of castor oil; and
'partook plentifully of some warm gruel, the flavor of which he
'appeared to relish. Towards eleven o'clock he was so much
'worse that it was found necessary to muffle the stable-knocker.
'At half-past, or thereabouts, he was heard talking to himself
'about the horse and Topping's family, and to add some inco-
'herent expressions which are supposed to have been either a
'foreboding of his approaching dissolution, or some wishes rela-
'tive to the disposal of his little property: consisting chiefly of Disposal of his property.
'half-pence which he had buried in different parts of the garden.
'On the clock striking twelve he appeared slightly agitated, but
'he soon recovered, walked twice or thrice along the coach-house,
'stopped to bark, staggered, exclaimed *Halloa old girl!* (his
'favourite expression), and died.

'He behaved throughout with a decent fortitude, equanimity,
'and self-possession, which cannot be too much admired. I
'deeply regret that being in ignorance of his danger I did not
'attend to receive his last instructions. Something remarkable
'about his eyes occasioned Topping to run for the doctor at The doctor sent for.
'twelve. When they returned together our friend was gone. It
'was the medical gentleman who informed me of his decease.
'He did it with great caution and delicacy, preparing me by the
'remark that "a jolly queer start had taken place"; but the
'shock was very great notwithstanding. I am not wholly free Suspicions.
'from suspicions of poison. A malicious butcher has been heard
'to say that he would "do" for him: his plea was that he would

London: 1841.

'not be molested in taking orders down the mews, by any bird 'that wore a tail. Other persons have also been heard to 'threaten: among others, Charles Knight, who has just started a 'weekly publication price fourpence: *Barnaby* being, as you 'know, threepence. I have directed a post-mortem examination, 'and the body has been removed to Mr. Herring's school of 'anatomy for that purpose.

'I could wish, if you can take the trouble, that you could 'inclose this to Forster immediately after you have read it. I 'cannot discharge the painful task of communication more than 'once. Were they ravens who took manna to somebody in the

Family mourners.

'wilderness? At times I hope they were, and at others I fear 'they were not, or they would certainly have stolen it by the way. 'In profound sorrow, I am ever your bereaved friend C. D. 'Kate is as well as can be expected, but terribly low as you may 'suppose. The children seem rather glad of it. He bit their 'ancles. But that was play.' Maclise's covering letter to me was an apotheosis, to be rendered only in facsimile, and now visible on the opposite page.

Grip the second.

In what way the loss was replaced, so that *Barnaby* should have the fruit of continued study of the habits of the family of birds which Grip had so nobly represented, Dickens has told in the preface to the story; and another, older, and larger Grip, obtained through Mr. Smithson, was installed in the stable, almost before the stuffed remains of his honoured predecessor had been sent home in a glass case, by way of ornament to his bereaved master's study.

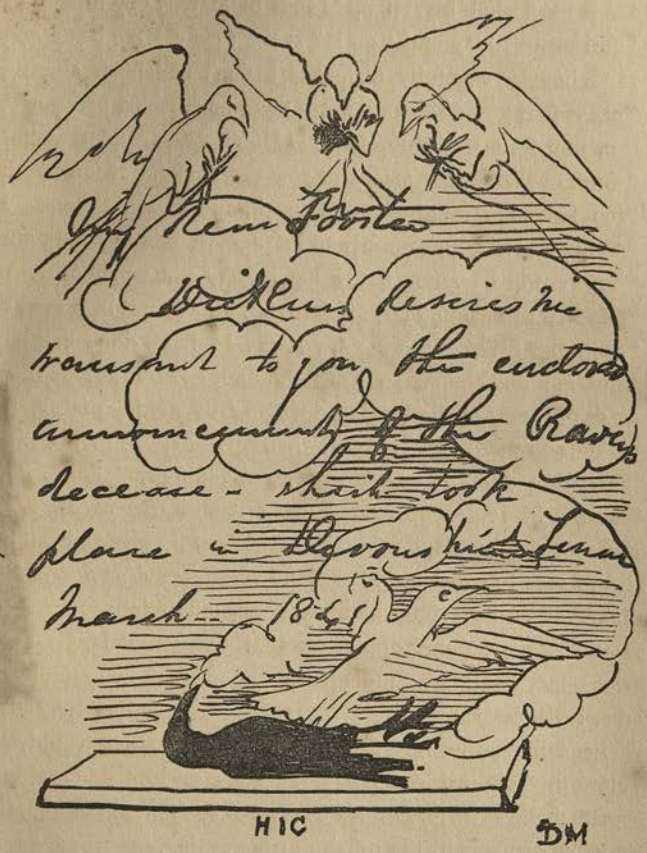
I resume our correspondence on what he was writing. 'I see 'there is yet room for a few lines,' (25th of March) 'and you are 'quite right in wishing what I cut out to be restored. I did not 'want Joe to be so short about Dolly, and really wrote his refer- 'ences to that young lady carefully—as natural things with a 'meaning in them. Chigwell, my dear fellow, is the greatest

The inn at Chigwell.

'place in the world. Name your day for going. Such a delicious 'old inn opposite the churchyard—such a lovely ride—such beau- 'tiful forest scenery—such an out of the way, rural, place—such 'a sexton! I say again, name your day.' The day was named

LONDON: 1841.

Death of raven.



apotheosis

Apotheosis by Maclise.

LONDON: 1841.

at once; and the whitest of stones marks it now in sorrowful memory. His promise was exceeded by our enjoyment; and his delight in the double recognition, of himself and of *Barnaby*, by the landlord of the nice old inn, far exceeded any pride he would have taken in what the world thinks the highest sort of honour.

Reception there.

'I have shut myself up' (26th of March) 'by myself to-day, 'and mean to try and "go it" at the *Clock;* Kate being out, and 'the house peacefully dismal. I don't remember altering the 'exact part you object to, but if there be anything here you object 'to, knock it out ruthlessly.' 'Don't fail' (April the 5th) 'to 'erase anything that seems to you too strong. It is difficult for 'me to judge what tells too much, and what does not. I am 'trying a very quiet number to set against this necessary one. I 'hope it will be good, but I am in very sad condition for work. 'Glad you think this powerful. What I have put in is more relief, 'from the raven.' Two days later: 'I have done that number 'and am now going to work on another. I am bent (please 'Heaven) on finishing the first chapter by Friday night. I hope 'to look in upon you to-night, when we'll dispose of the toasts for 'Saturday. Still bilious—but a good number, I hope, notwith-'standing. Jeffrey has come to town and was here yesterday.

Working alone.

The toasts to be disposed of were those to be given at the dinner on the 10th to celebrate the second volume of *Master Humphrey*, when Talfourd presided and there was much jollity. According to the memorandum drawn up that Saturday night now lying before me, we all in the greatest good humour glorified each other: Talfourd proposing the *Clock*, Macready Mrs. Dickens, Dickens the publishers, and myself the artists; Macready giving Talfourd, Talfourd Macready, Dickens myself, and myself the comedian Mr. Harley, whose humorous songs had been no inconsiderable element in the mirth of the evening.

A 'Clock dinner.

Five days later he writes: 'I finished the number yesterday, 'and, although I dined with Jeffrey, and was obliged to go to 'Lord Denman's afterwards (which made me late), have done 'eight slips of the *Lamplighter* for Mrs. Macrone, this morning. 'When I have got that off my mind, I shall try to go on steadily, 'fetching up the *Clock* lee-way.' The *Lamplighter* was his old

Lord Jeffrey in London.

farce, which he now turned into a comic tale; and this, with other contributions given him by friends and edited by him as *Pic Nic Papers*, enabled him to help the widow of his old publisher in her straitened means by a gift of £300. He had finished his work of charity before he next wrote of *Barnaby Rudge*, but he was fetching up his lee-way lazily. 'I am getting on' (29th of April) 'very slowly. I want to stick to the story; and the fear 'of committing myself, because of the impossibility of trying back 'or altering a syllable, makes it much harder than it looks. It 'was too bad of me to give you the trouble of cutting the number, 'but I knew so well you would do it in the right places. For 'what Harley would call the "onward work" I really think I 'have some famous thoughts.' There is an interval of a month before the next allusion. 'Solomon's expression' (3rd of June) 'I meant to be one of those strong ones to which strong circum-'stances give birth in the commonest minds. Deal with it as you 'like. . . . Say what you please of Gordon' (I had objected to some points in his view of this madman, stated much too favourably as I thought), 'he must have been at heart a kind man, and 'a lover of the despised and rejected, after his own fashion. He 'lived upon a small income, and always within it; was known to 'relieve the necessities of many people; exposed in his place the 'corrupt attempt of a minister to buy him out of Parliament; and 'did great charities in Newgate. He always spoke on the 'people's side, and tried against his muddled brains to expose 'the profligacy of both parties. He never got anything by his 'madness, and never sought it. The wildest and most raging 'attacks of the time, allow him these merits: and not to let him 'have 'em in their full extent, remembering in what a (politically) 'wicked time he lived, would lie upon my conscience heavily. 'The libel he was imprisoned for when he died, was on the queen 'of France; and the French government interested themselves 'warmly to procure his release—which I think they might have 'done, but for Lord Grenville.' I was more successful in the counsel I gave against a fancy he had at this part of the story, that he would introduce as actors in the Gordon riots three splendid fellows who should order, lead, control, and be obeyed

LONDON: 1841.

Pic Nic Papers: ante, 80.

Character of Lord George Gordon.

Unprofitable madness.

A doubtful fancy.

London: 1841.

as natural guides of the crowd in that delirious time, and who should turn out, when all was over, to have broken out from Bedlam: but though he saw the unsoundness of this, he could not so readily see, in Gordon's case, the danger of taxing ingenuity to ascribe a reasonable motive to acts of sheer insanity. The feeblest parts of the book are those in which Lord George and his secretary appear.

From Edinburgh.

He left for Scotland after the middle of June, but he took work with him. 'You may suppose,' he wrote from Edinburgh on the 30th, 'I have not done much work—but by Friday night's post 'from here I hope to send the first long chapter of a number and 'both the illustrations; from Loch-earn on Tuesday night, the 'closing chapter of that number; from the same place on Thurs-'day night, the first long chapter of another, with both the 'illustrations; and, from some place which no man ever spelt 'but which sounds like Ballyhoolish, on Saturday, the closing 'chapter of that number, which will leave us all safe till I return 'to town.' Nine days later he wrote from 'Ballechelish:' 'I

Interest in his new labour.

'have done all I can or need do in the way of *Barnaby* until I 'come home, and the story is progressing (I hope you will think) 'to good strong interest. I have left it, I think, at an exciting 'point, with a good dawning of the riots. In the first of the 'two numbers I have written since I have been away, I forget 'whether the blind man, in speaking to Barnaby about riches, 'tells him they are to be found in *crowds*. If I have not actually 'used that word, will you introduce it? A perusal of the proof 'of the following number (70) will show you how, and why.' 'Have you,' he wrote, shortly after his return (29th July), seen 'no. 71? I thought there was a good glimpse of a crowd, from 'a window—eh?' He had now taken thoroughly to the interest

Constraints of weekly publication.

of his closing chapters, and felt more than ever the constraints of his form of publication. 'I am warming up very much' (on the 5th of August from Broadstairs) 'about *Barnaby*. Oh! If I 'only had him, from this time to the end, in monthly numbers. '*N'importe!* I hope the interest will be pretty strong—and, in 'every number, stronger.' Six days later, from the same place: 'I was always sure I could make a good thing of *Barnaby*, and

'I think you'll find that it comes out strong to the last word. LONDON: 1841.
'I have another number ready, all but two slips. Don't fear
'for young Chester. The time hasn't come—there we go again,
'you see, with the weekly delays. I am in great heart and
'spirits with the story, and with the prospect of having time to
'think before I go on again.' A month's interval followed, and what occupied it will be described shortly. On the 11th of September he wrote: 'I have just burnt into Newgate, and am The prison-riots.
'going in the next number to tear the prisoners out by the hair
'of their heads. The number which gets into the jail you'll have
'in proof by Tuesday.' This was followed up a week later: 'I
'have let all the prisoners out of Newgate, burnt down Lord
'Mansfield's, and played the very devil. Another number will
'finish the fires, and help us on towards the end. I feel quite
'smoky when I am at work. I want elbow-room terribly.' To this trouble, graver supervened at his return, a serious personal Serious illness.
sickness not the least; but he bore up gallantly, and I had never better occasion than now to observe his quiet endurance of pain, how little he thought of himself where the sense of self is commonly supreme, and the manful duty with which everything was done that, ailing as he was, he felt it necessary to do. He was still in his sick-room (22nd of October) when he wrote: 'I hope I shan't leave off any more, now, until I
'have finished *Barnaby*.' Three days after that, he was busying Close of *Barnaby*.
himself eagerly for others; and on the 2nd of November the printers received the close of *Barnaby Rudge*.

This tale was Dickens's first attempt out of the sphere of the life of the day and its actual manners. Begun during the progress of *Oliver Twist*, it had been for some time laid aside; the form it ultimately took had been comprised only partially within Character of the book.
its first design; and the story in its finished shape presented strongly a special purpose, the characteristic of all but his very earliest writings. Its scene is laid at the time when the incessant execution of men and women, comparatively innocent, disgraced every part of the country; demoralizing thousands, whom it also prepared for the scaffold. In those days the theft of a few rags from a bleaching ground, or the abstraction of a roll of ribbons

London: 1841.

from a counter, was visited with the penalty of blood; and such laws brutalized both their ministers and victims. It was the time, too, when a false religious outcry brought with it appalling guilt and misery. Such vices leave more behind them than the first forms assumed, and involve a lesson sufficiently required to justify a writer in dealing with them. There were also others grafted on them. In Barnaby himself it was desired to show what sources of comfort there might be, for the patient and cheerful heart, in even the worst of all human afflictions; and in the hunted life of the outcast father, whose crime had entailed not that affliction only but other more fearful wretchedness, we have as powerful a picture as any in his writings of the inevitable and unfathomable consequences of sin. It was the late Lord Lytton's opinion that Dickens had done nothing finer in point of art than this. But, as the story went on, it was incident to such designs that what had been accomplished in its predecessor could hardly be attained here, in singleness of purpose, unity of idea, or harmony of treatment; and other defects supervened in the management of the plot. The interest with which the tale begins, has ceased to be its interest before the close; and what has chiefly taken the reader's fancy at the outset, almost wholly disappears in the power and passion with which, in the later chapters, the great riots are described. So admirable is this description, however, that it would be hard to have to surrender it even for a more perfect structure of fable.

Lessons of *Barnaby Rudge.*

Defects in the plot.

There are few things more masterly in any of his books. From the first low mutterings of the storm to its last terrible explosion, the frantic outbreak of popular ignorance and rage is depicted with unabated power. The aimlessness of idle mischief by which the ranks of the rioters are swelled at the beginning; the recklessness induced by the monstrous impunity allowed to the early excesses; the sudden spread of drunken guilt into every haunt of poverty, ignorance, or mischief in the wicked old city, where such rich materials of crime lie festering; the wild action of its poison on all, without scheme or plan of any kind, who come within its reach; the horrors that are more bewildering for so complete an absence of purpose in them; and,

Descriptive power.

when all is done, the misery found to have been self-inflicted in every cranny and corner of London, as if a plague had swept over the streets: these are features in the picture of an actual occurrence, to which the manner of the treatment gives extraordinary force and meaning. Nor, in the sequel, is there anything displayed with more profitable vividness, than the law's indiscriminate cruelty at last in contrast with its cowardly indifference at first; while, among the casual touches lighting up the scene with flashes of reality that illumine every part of it, may be instanced the discovery, in the quarter from which screams for succour are loudest when Newgate is supposed to be accidentally on fire, of four men who were certain in any case to have perished on the drop next day.

London: 1841.

Vivid touches.

The story, which has unusually careful writing in it, and much manly upright thinking, has not so many people eagerly adopted as of kin by everybody, as its predecessors are famous for; but it has yet a fair proportion of such as take solid form within the mind, and keep hold of the memory. To these belong in an especial degree Gabriel Varden and his household, on whom are lavished all the writer's fondness, and not a little of his keenest humour. The honest locksmith with his jovial jug, and the tink-tink-tink of his pleasant nature making cheerful music out of steel and iron; the buxom wife, with her plaguy tongue that makes every one wretched whom her kindly disposition would desire to make happy; the good hearted plump little Dolly, coquettish minx of a daughter, with all she suffers and inflicts by her fickle winning ways, and her small self-admiring vanities; and Miggs the vicious and slippery, acid, amatory, and of uncomfortable figure, sower of family discontents and discords, who swears all the while she wouldn't make or meddle with 'em 'not for a annual gold mine and found in tea and sugar';—there is not much social painting anywhere with a better domestic moral, than in all these; and a nice propriety of feeling and thought regulates the use of such satire throughout. No one knows more exactly how far to go with that formidable weapon; or understands better that what satirizes everything, in effect satirizes nothing.

Principal characters.

Social satire.

London: 1841.

Barnaby and his raven.

Another excellent group is that which the story opens with, in the quaint old kitchen of the Maypole; John Willett and his friends, genuinely comic creations all of them. Then we have Barnaby and his raven: the light-hearted idiot, as unconscious of guilt as of suffering, and happy with no sense but of the influences of nature; and the grave sly bird, with sufficient sense to make himself as unhappy as rascally habits will make the human animal. There is poor brutish Hugh, too, loitering lazily outside the Maypole door, with a storm of passions in him raging to be let loose; already the scaffold's withered fruit, as he is doomed to be its ripe offering; and though with all the worst instincts of the savage, yet not without also some of the best. Still farther out of kindly nature's pitying reach lurks the worst villain of the scene: with this sole claim to consideration, that it was by constant contact with the filthiest instrument of law and state he had become the mass of moral filth he is. Mr. Dennis the hangman is a portrait that Hogarth would have painted with the same wholesome severity of satire employed upon it in *Barnaby Rudge.*

Dennis the hangman.

X.

IN EDINBURGH.

1841.

Among the occurrences of the year, apart from the tale he was writing, the birth of his fourth child and second son has been briefly mentioned. 'I mean to call the boy Edgar,' he wrote the day after he was born (9th February), 'a good honest Saxon 'name, I think.' He changed his mind in a few days, however, on resolving to ask Landor to be godfather. This intention, as soon as formed, he announced to our excellent old friend; telling him it would give the child something to boast of, to be called Walter Landor, and that to call him so would do his own heart good. For, as to himself, whatever realities had gone out of the ceremony of christening, the meaning still remained in it of

Son Walter.

enabling him to form a relationship with friends he most loved: and as to the boy, he held that to give him a name to be proud of was to give him also another reason for doing nothing unworthy or untrue when he came to be a man. Walter, alas! only lived to manhood. He obtained a military cadetship through the kindness of Miss Coutts, and died at Calcutta on the last day of 1863, in his 23rd year. LONDON: 1841. Dies in Calcutta, 1863.

The interest taken by this distinguished lady in Dickens and his family began, as I have said, at an earlier date than even this; and I remember his pleasure, while *Oliver Twist* was going on, at her father's mention of him in a speech at Birmingham, for his advocacy of the cause of the poor. Whether to the new poor law Sir Francis Burdett objected as strongly as we have seen that Dickens did, as well as many other excellent men, who forgot the atrocities of the system it displaced in their indignation at the needless harshness with which it was worked at the outset, I have not at hand the means of knowing. But certainly this continued to be strongly the feeling of Dickens, who exulted at nothing so much as at any misadventure to the whigs in connection with it. 'How often used Black and I,' he wrote to me in April, 'to quarrel about the effect of the poor-law bill! Walter 'comes in upon the cry. See whether the whigs go out upon it.' It was the strong desire he had to make himself heard upon it, even in parliament, that led him not immediately to turn aside from a proposal, now privately made by some of the magnates of Reading, to bring him in for that borough; but the notion was soon dismissed, as, on its revival more than once in later times, it continued very wisely to be. His opinions otherwise were extremely radical at present, as will be apparent shortly; and he did not at all relish Peel's majority of one when it came soon after, and unseated the whigs. It was just now, I may add, he greatly enjoyed a quiet setting-down of Moore by Rogers at Sir Francis Burdett's table, for talking exaggerated toryism. So debased was the house of commons by reform, said Moore, that a Burke, if you could find him, would not be listened to. 'No 'such thing, Tommy,' said Rogers; '*find yourself*, and they'd 'listen even to you.' Sir F. Burdett. The new poor-law. Moore and Rogers.

London: 1841.

This was not many days before he hinted to me an intention soon to be carried out in a rather memorable manner. 'I have 'done nothing to-day' (18th March: we had bought books together, the day before, at Tom Hill's sale) 'but cut the *Swift*, 'looking into it with a delicious laziness in all manner of delightful places, and put poor Tom's books away. I had a letter 'from Edinburgh this morning, announcing that Jeffrey's visit 'to London will be the week after next; telling me that he drives 'about Edinburgh declaring there has been "nothing so good 'as Nell since Cordelia," which he writes also to all manner 'of people; and informing me of a desire in that romantic town 'to give me greeting and welcome. For this and other reasons 'I am disposed to make Scotland my destination in June rather 'than Ireland. Think, *do* think, meantime (here are ten good 'weeks), whether you couldn't, by some effort worthy of the 'owner of the gigantic helmet, go with us. Think of such a 'fortnight—York, Carlisle, Berwick, your own Borders, Edin- 'burgh, Rob Roy's country, railroads, cathedrals, country inns, 'Arthur's-seat, lochs, glens, and home by sea. DO think of this, 'seriously, at leisure.' It was very tempting, but not to be.

Jeffrey's praise of Little Nell.

Resolve to visit Scotland.

Early in April Jeffrey came, many feasts and entertainments welcoming him, of which he very sparingly partook; and before he left, the visit to Scotland in June was all duly arranged, to be initiated by the splendid welcome of a public dinner in Edinburgh, with Lord Jeffrey himself in the chair. 'Willy Allan,' the celebrated artist, had come up meanwhile, with increasing note of preparation; and it was while we were all regretting Wilkie's absence abroad, and Dickens with warrantable pride was saying how surely the great painter would have gone to this dinner, that the shock of his sudden death* came, and there was left but the sorrowful satisfaction of honouring his memory. There was one other change before the day. 'I heard from Edinburgh this 'morning,' he wrote on the 15th of June. 'Jeffrey is not well 'enough to take the chair, so Wilson does. I think under all

Edinburgh dinner proposed.

Sir David Wilkie's death.

* Dickens refused to believe it at first. 'My heart assures me Wilkie 'liveth,' he wrote. 'He is the sort of 'man who will be VERY old when he 'dies'—and certainly one would have said so.

'circumstances of politics, acquaintance, and *Edinburgh Review*, LONDON 1841.
'that it's much better as it is—Don't you?'

His first letter from Edinburgh, where he and Mrs. Dickens had taken up quarters at the Royal-hotel on their arrival the previous night, is dated the 23rd of June. 'I have been this 'morning to the Parliament-house, and am now introduced (I 'hope) to everybody in Edinburgh. The hotel is perfectly be- 'sieged, and I have been forced to take refuge in a sequestered 'apartment at the end of a long passage, wherein I write this 'letter. They talk of 300 at the dinner. We are very well off 'in point of rooms, having a handsome sitting-room, another next 'to it for *Clock* purposes, a spacious bed-room, and large dressing- 'room adjoining. The castle is in front of the windows, and the 'view noble. There was a supper ready last night which would 'have been a dinner anywhere.' This was his first practical experience of the honours his fame had won for him, and it found him as eager to receive as all were eager to give. Very interesting still, too, are those who took leading part in the celebration; and, in his pleasant sketches of them, there are some once famous and familiar figures not so well known to the present generation. Here, among the first, are Wilson and Robertson.

EDINBURGH: 23rd June.

'The renowned Peter Robertson is a large, portly, full-faced Peter Robertson.
'man with a merry eye, and a queer way of looking under his 'spectacles which is characteristic and pleasant. He seems a 'very warm-hearted earnest man too, and I felt quite at home 'with him forthwith. Walking up and down the hall of the 'courts of law (which was full of advocates, writers to the 'signet, clerks, and idlers) was a tall, burly, handsome man Professor Wilson.
'of eight and fifty, with a gait like O'Connell's, the bluest eye 'you can imagine, and long hair—longer than mine—falling 'down in a wild way under the broad brim of his hat. He had 'on a surtout coat, a blue checked shirt; the collar standing up, 'and kept in its place with a wisp of black neckerchief; no 'waistcoat; and a large pocket-handkerchief thrust into his 'breast, which was all broad and open. At his heels followed 'a wiry, sharp-eyed, shaggy devil of a terrier, dogging his steps

Edinburgh: 1841.

'as he went slashing up and down, now with one man beside 'him, now with another, and now quite alone, but always at a 'fast, rolling pace, with his head in the air, and his eyes as wide 'open as he could get them. I guessed it was Wilson, and it 'was. A bright, clear-complexioned, mountain-looking fellow, 'he looks as though he had just come down from the Highlands, 'and had never in his life taken pen in hand. But he has had 'an attack of paralysis in his right arm, within this month. He 'winced when I shook hands with him; and once or twice when 'we were walking up and down, slipped as if he had stumbled 'on a piece of orange-peel. He is a great fellow to look at, and 'to talk to; and, if you could divest your mind of the actual 'Scott, is just the figure you would put in his place.'

A fancy of Scott.

Nor have the most ordinary incidents of the visit any lack of interest for us now, in so far as they help to complete the picture of himself. 'Allan has been squiring me about, all the morning. 'He and Fletcher have gone to a meeting of the dinner-stewards, 'and I take the opportunity of writing to you. They dine with 'us to-day, and we are going to-night to the theatre. M'Ian is 'playing there. I mean to leave a card for him before evening. 'We are engaged for every day of our stay, already; but the 'people I have seen are so very hearty and warm in their 'manner that much of the horror of lionization gives way before it. I am glad to find that they propose giving me for a toast 'on Friday the Memory of Wilkie. I should have liked it better 'than anything, if I could have made my choice. Communicate 'all particulars to Mac. I would to God you were both here. 'Do dine together at the Gray's-inn on Friday, and think of me. 'If I don't drink my first glass of wine to you, may my pistols 'miss fire, and my mare slip her shoulder. All sorts of regard 'from Kate. She has gone with Miss Allan to see the house 'she was born in, &c. Write me soon, and long, &c.'

Lionization made tolerable.

Thoughts of home.

His next letter was written the morning after the dinner, on Saturday the 26th June. 'The great event is over; and being 'gone, I am a man again. It was the most brilliant affair you 'can conceive; the completest success possible, from first to last. 'The room was crammed, and more than seventy applicants for

The dinner.

'tickets were of necessity refused yesterday. Wilson was ill, but 'plucked up like a lion, and spoke famously. I send you a paper 'herewith, but the report is dismal in the extreme. They say 'there will be a better one—I don't know where or when. Should 'there be, I will send it to you. I *think* (ahem!) that I spoke 'rather well. It was an excellent room, and both the subjects '(Wilson and Scottish Literature, and the Memory of Wilkie) 'were good to go upon. There were nearly two hundred ladies 'present. The place is so contrived that the cross table is raised 'enormously: much above the heads of people sitting below: 'and the effect on first coming in (on me, I mean) was rather 'tremendous. I was quite self-possessed however, and, notwith- 'standing the enthoosemoosy, which was very startling, as cool 'as a cucumber. I wish to God you had been there, as it is 'impossible for the "distinguished guest" to describe the scene. 'It beat all natur'. . . .

EDINBURGH: 1841.

His reception.

Here was the close of his letter. 'I have been expecting every 'day to hear from you, and not hearing mean to make this the 'briefest epistle possible. We start next Sunday (that's to-morrow 'week). We are going out to Jeffrey's to-day (he is very unwell), 'and return here to-morrow evening. If I don't find a letter 'from you when I come back, expect no Lights and Shadows of 'Scottish Life from your indignant correspondent. Murray the 'manager made very excellent, tasteful, and gentlemanly mention 'of Macready, about whom Wilson had been asking me divers 'questions during dinner.' 'A hundred thanks for your letter,' he writes four days later. 'I read it this morning with the 'greatest pleasure and delight, and answer it with ditto, ditto. 'Where shall I begin—about my darlings? I am delighted with 'Charley's precocity. He takes arter his father, he does. God 'bless them, you can't imagine (*you!* how can you!) how 'much I long to see them. It makes me quite sorrowful to 'think of them. . . . Yesterday, sir, the lord provost, council, 'and magistrates voted me by acclamation the freedom of the 'city, in testimony (I quote the letter just received from "James '"Forrest, lord provost") "of the sense entertained by them of '"your distinguished abilities as an author." I acknowledged

Home yearnings.

Freedom of the city voted.

Edinburgh; 1841.

'this morning in appropriate terms the honour they had done me, 'and through me the pursuit to which I was devoted. It *is* 'handsome, is it not?'

The parchment scroll of the city-freedom, recording the grounds on which it was voted, hung framed in his study to the last, and was one of his valued possessions. Answering some question of mine he told me further as to the speakers, and gave some amusing glimpses of the party-spirit which still at that time ran high in the capital of the north.

Whig and tory.

'The men who spoke at the dinner were all the most rising 'men here, and chiefly at the Bar. They were all, alternately, 'whigs and tories; with some few radicals, such as Gordon, who 'gave the memory of Burns. He is Wilson's son-in-law and the 'lord advocate's nephew—a very masterly speaker indeed, who 'ought to become a distinguished man. Neaves, who gave the 'other poets, a *little* too lawyer-like for my taste, is a great gun in 'the courts. Mr. Primrose is Lord Rosebery's son. Adam Black, 'the publisher as you know. Dr. Alison, a very popular friend of 'the poor. Robertson you know. Allan you know. Colquhoun 'is an advocate. All these men were selected for the toasts as 'being crack speakers, known men, and opposed to each other Politics and party. 'very strongly in politics. For this reason, the professors and so 'forth who sat upon the platform about me made no speeches 'and had none assigned them. I felt it was very remarkable to 'see such a number of grey-headed men gathered about my 'brown flowing locks; and it struck most of those who were 'present very forcibly. The judges, solicitor-general, lord-advo-'cate, and so forth, were all here to call, the day after our arrival. 'The judges never go to public dinners in Scotland. Lord 'Meadowbank alone broke through the custom, and none of his 'successors have imitated him. It will give you a good notion of '*party* to hear that the solicitor-general and lord-advocate refused 'to go, though they had previously engaged, unless the croupier or The law-officers. 'the chairman were a whig. Both (Wilson and Robertson) were 'tories, simply because, Jeffrey excepted, no whig could be found 'who was adapted to the office. The solicitor laid strict injunctions 'on Napier not to go if a whig were not in office. No whig was,

'and he stayed away. I think this is good?—bearing in mind 'that all the old whigs of Edinburgh were cracking their throats 'in the room. They give out that they were ill, and the lord- 'advocate did actually lie in bed all the afternoon; but this is the 'real truth, and one of the judges told it me with great glee. It 'seems they couldn't quite trust Wilson or Robertson, as they 'thought; and feared some tory demonstration. Nothing of the 'kind took place; and ever since, these men have been the 'loudest in their praises of the whole affair.'

EDINBURGH: 1841.

Whig jealousies.

The close of his letter tells us all his engagements, and completes his grateful picture of the hearty Scottish welcome. It has also some personal touches worth preserving. 'A threat reached 'me last night (they have been hammering at it in their papers, it 'seems, for some time) of a dinner at Glasgow. But I hope, 'having circulated false rumours of my movements, to get away 'before they send to me; and only to stop there on my way 'home, to change horses and send to the post-office. . . . You 'will like to know how we have been living. Here's a list of 'engagements, past and present. Wednesday we dined at home, 'and went incog to the theatre at night, to Murray's box: the 'pieces admirably done, and M'Ian in the *Two Drovers* quite 'wonderful, and most affecting. Thursday, to Lord Murray's; 'dinner and evening party. Friday, *the* dinner. Saturday, to 'Jeffrey's, a beautiful place about three miles off' (Craig-crook, which at Lord Jeffrey's invitation I afterwards visited with him), 'stop there all night, dine on Sunday, and home at eleven. 'Monday, dine at Dr. Alison's, four miles off. Tuesday, dinner 'and evening party at Allan's. Wednesday, breakfast with Napier, 'dine with Blackwoods seven miles off, evening party at the 'treasurer's of the town-council, supper with all the artists (!!). 'Thursday, lunch at the solicitor-general's, dine at Lord Gillies's, 'evening party at Joseph Gordon's, one of Brougham's earliest 'supporters. Friday, dinner and evening party at Robertson's. 'Saturday, dine again at Jeffrey's; back to the theatre, at half- 'past nine to the moment, for public appearance;* places all

Rumours from Glasgow.

At the theatre.

Hospitalities.

* On this occasion, as he told me afterwards, the orchestra did a double

Edinburgh: 1841.

'let, &c. &c. &c. Sunday, off at seven o'clock in the morning to 'Stirling, and then to Callender, a stage further. Next day, to 'Loch-earn, and pull up there for three days, to rest and work.

Moral of it all.

'The moral of all this is, that there is no place like home; and 'that I thank God most heartily for having given me a quiet 'spirit, and a heart that won't hold many people. I sigh for 'Devonshire-terrace and Broadstairs, for battledore and shuttle-'cock; I want to dine in a blouse with you and Mac; and I 'feel Topping's merits more acutely than I have ever done in my 'life. On Sunday evening the 17th of July I shall revisit my 'household gods, please heaven. I wish the day were here. For 'God's sake be in waiting. I wish you and Mac would dine in 'Devonshire-terrace that day with Fred. He has the key of

Proposed visit to the Highlands.

'the cellar. *Do.* We shall be at Inverary in the Highlands on 'Tuesday week, getting to it through the pass of Glencoe, of 'which you may have heard! On Thursday following we shall 'be at Glasgow, where I shall hope to receive your last letter 'before we meet. At Inverary, too, I shall make sure of finding 'at least one, at the post-office. . . . Little Allan is trying hard 'for the post of queen's limner for Scotland, vacant by poor 'Wilkie's death. Every one is in his favor but —— who is job-'bing for some one else. Appoint him, will you, and I'll give up 'the premier-ship.—How I breakfasted to-day in the house where 'Scott lived seven and twenty years; how I have made solemn 'pledges to write about missing children in the *Edinburgh Review*, 'and will do my best to keep them; how I have declined to be 'brought in, free gratis for nothing and qualified to boot, for a 'Scotch county that's going a begging, lest I should be thought 'to have dined on Friday under false pretences; these, with other 'marvels, shall be yours anon. . . . I must leave off sharp, to 'get dressed and off upon the seven miles dinner trip. Kate's

Maclise and Macready.

'affectionate regards. My hearty loves to Mac and Grim.' Grim was another great artist having the same beginning to his name, whose tragic studies had suggested an epithet quite inapplicable to any of his personal qualities.

stroke of business, much to the amazement of himself and his friends, by improvising at his entrance *Charley is my Darling*, amid tumultuous shouts of delight.

EDINBURGH: 1841.

Guide to the Highlands.

The narrative of the trip to the Highlands must have a chapter to itself and its incidents of adventure and comedy. The latter chiefly were due to the guide who accompanied him, a quasi-highlander himself, named a few pages back as Mr. Kindheart, whose real name was Mr. Angus Fletcher, and to whom it hardly needs that I should give other mention than will be supplied by such future notices of him as his friend's letters may contain. He had much talent, but too fitful and wayward to concentrate on a settled pursuit; and though at the time we knew him first he had taken up the profession of a sculptor, he abandoned it soon afterwards. His mother, a woman distinguished by many remarkable qualities, lived now in the English lake-country; and it was no fault of hers that her son preferred a wandering life to that of home. His unfitness for an ordinary career was perhaps the secret of such liking for him as Dickens had. Fletcher's eccentricity and absurdities, divided often by the thinnest partition from a foolish extravagance, but occasionally clever, and always the genuine though whimsical outgrowth of the life he led, had a curious charm for Dickens. He enjoyed the oddity and humour; tolerated all the rest; and to none more freely than to Kindheart during the next few years, both in Italy and in England, opened his house and hospitality.

XI.

IN THE HIGHLANDS.

1841.

THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.

FROM Loch-earn-head Dickens wrote on Monday the 5th of July, having reached it, 'wet through,' at four that afternoon. 'Having had a great deal to do in a crowded house on Saturday 'night at the theatre, we left Edinburgh yesterday morning at half 'past seven, and travelled, with Fletcher for our guide, to a place 'called Stewart's-hotel, nine miles further than Callender. We 'had neglected to order rooms, and were obliged to make a

The Highlands: 1841.

'sitting-room of our own bed-chamber; in which my genius for stowing furniture away was of the very greatest service. Fletcher slept 'in a kennel with three panes of glass in it, which formed part and 'parcel of a window; the other three panes whereof belonged to 'a man who slept on the other side of the partition. He told me A fright. 'this morning that he had had a nightmare all night, and had 'screamed horribly, he knew. The stranger, as you may suppose, 'hired a gig and went off at full gallop with the first glimpse of 'daylight.* Being very tired (for we had not had more than three 'hours' sleep on the previous night) we lay till ten this morning; The Trossachs. 'and at half past eleven went through the Trossachs to Loch-'katrine, where I walked from the hotel after tea last night. It is 'impossible to say what a glorious scene it was. It rained as it 'never does rain anywhere but here. We conveyed Kate up a 'rocky pass to go and see the island of the Lady of the Lake, but 'she gave in after the first five minutes, and we left her, very 'picturesque and uncomfortable, with Tom' (the servant they had brought with them from Devonshire-terrace) 'holding an umbrella 'over her head, while we climbed on. When we came back, she 'had gone into the carriage. We were wet through to the skin, Mr. Kindheart. 'and came on in that state four and twenty miles. Fletcher is

* Good kind Mr. Fletcher had, among his other peculiarities, a habit of venting any particular emotion in a wildness of cry that went beyond even the descriptive power of his friend, who referred to it frequently in his Broadstairs letters. Here is an instance (20th Sept. 1840) 'Mrs. M. 'being in the next machine the other 'day heard him howl like a wolf (as 'he does) when he first touched the 'cold water. I am glad to have my 'former story in that respect con-'firmed. There is no sound on earth 'like it. In the infernal regions there 'may be, but elsewhere there is no 'compound addition of wild beasts 'that could produce its like for their 'total. The description of the wolves 'in *Robinson Crusoe* is the nearest 'thing; but it's feeble—very feeble—'in comparison.' Of the generally amiable side to all his eccentricities I am tempted to give an illustration from the same letter. 'An alarming report 'being brought to me the other day 'that he was preaching, I betook 'myself to the spot and found he was 'reading Wordsworth to a family on 'the terrace, outside the house, in 'the open air and public way. The 'whole town were out. When he 'had given them a taste of Words-'worth, he sent home for Mrs. Nor-'ton's book, and entertained them 'with selections from that. He con-'cluded with an imitation of Mrs. 'Hemans reading her own poetry, 'which he performed with a pocket-'handkerchief over his head to imitate 'her veil—all this in public, before 'everybody.'

'very good natured, and of extraordinary use in these outlandish 'parts. His habit of going into kitchens and bars, disconcerting 'at Broadstairs, is here of great service. Not expecting us till 'six, they hadn't lighted our fires when we arrived here; and if 'you had seen him (with whom the responsibility of the omission 'rested) running in and out of the sitting-room and the two bed-'rooms with a great pair of bellows, with which he distractedly 'blew each of the fires out in turn, you would have died of 'laughing. He had on his head a great highland cap, on his 'back a white coat, and cut such a figure as even the inimitable 'can't depicter . . .

THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.

The travellers' guide.

Comica picture.

'The inns, inside and out, are the queerest places imaginable. 'From the road, this one,' at Loch-earn-head, 'looks like a white 'wall, with windows in it by mistake. We have a good sitting-'room though, on the first floor: as large (but not as lofty) as my 'study. The bed-rooms are of that size which renders it im-'possible for you to move, after you have taken your boots off, 'without chipping pieces out of your legs. There isn't a basin in 'the Highlands which will hold my face; not a drawer which 'will open after you have put your clothes in it; not a water-'bottle capacious enough to wet your toothbrush. The huts are 'wretched and miserable beyond all description. The food (for 'those who can pay for it) "not bad," as M. would say: oatcake, 'mutton, hotch potch, trout from the loch, small beer bottled, 'marmalade, and whiskey. Of the last named article I have 'taken about a pint to-day. The weather is what they call "soft" '—which means that the sky is a vast water-spout that never 'leaves off emptying itself; and the liquor has no more effect 'than water. . . . . (I am going to work to-morrow, and hope 'before leaving here to write you again. The elections have 'been sad work indeed. That they should return Sibthorp and 'reject Bulwer, is by Heaven, a national disgrace. . . . I don't 'wonder the devil flew over Lincoln. The people were far too 'addle-headed, even for him.) . . . . I don't bore you with accounts 'of Ben this and that, and Lochs of all sorts of names, but this is 'a wonderful region. The way the mists were stalking about to-'day, and the clouds lying down upon the hills; the deep glens,

Highland accommodation.

Weather.

THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.

'the high rocks, the rushing waterfalls, and the roaring rivers 'down in deep gulfs below; were all stupendous. This house is

Grand scenery.

'wedged round by great heights that are lost in the clouds; 'and the loch, twelve miles long, stretches out its dreary length 'before the windows. In my next I shall soar to the sublime, 'perhaps; in this here present writing I confine myself to the 'ridiculous. But I am always,' &c. &c.

From Ballechelish.

His next letter bore the date of 'Ballechelish, Friday evening, 'ninth July, 1841, half past nine, P.M.' and described what we had often longed to see together, the Pass of Glencoe. . . . 'I 'can't go to bed without writing to you from here, though the 'post will not leave this place until we have left it, and arrived at

Changes in route.

'another. On looking over the route which Lord Murray made 'out for me, I found he had put down Thursday next for Abbots- 'ford and Dryburgh-abbey, and a journey of seventy miles 'besides! Therefore, and as I was happily able to steal a march 'upon myself at Loch-earn-head, and to finish in two days what I 'thought would take me three, we shall leave here to-morrow 'morning; and, by being a day earlier than we intended at all 'the places between this and Melrose (which we propose to 'reach by Wednesday night), we shall have a whole day for 'Scott's house and tomb, and still be at York on Saturday evening, 'and home, God willing, on Sunday. . . . We left Loch-earn-head 'last night, and went to a place called Killin, eight miles from it, 'where we slept. I walked some six miles with Fletcher after

A waterfall.

'we got there, to see a waterfall: and truly it was a magnificent 'sight, foaming and crashing down three great steeps of riven 'rock; leaping over the first as far off as you could carry your 'eye, and rumbling and foaming down into a dizzy pool below 'you, with a deafening roar. To-day we have had a journey of 'between 50 and 60 miles, through the bleakest and most deso- 'late part of Scotland, where the hill-tops are still covered with 'great patches of snow, and the road winds over steep mountain 'passes and on the brink of deep brooks and precipices. The 'cold all day has been *intense*, and the rain sometimes most 'violent. It has been impossible to keep warm, by any means; 'even whiskey failed; the wind was too piercing even for that.

'One stage of ten miles, over a place called the Black-mount, 'took us two hours and a half to do; and when we came to a 'lone public called the King's-house, at the entrance to Glencoe '—this was about three o'clock—we were well nigh frozen. We 'got a fire directly, and in twenty minutes they served us up 'some famous kippered salmon, broiled; a broiled fowl; hot 'mutton ham and poached eggs; pancakes; oatcakes; wheaten 'bread; butter; bottled porter; hot water, lump sugar, and 'whiskey; of which we made a very hearty meal. All the way, 'the road had been among moors and mountains with huge 'masses of rock, which fell down God knows where, sprinkling 'the ground in every direction, and giving it the aspect of the 'burial place of a race of giants. Now and then we passed a hut 'or two, with neither window nor chimney, and the smoke of the 'peat fire rolling out at the door. But there were not six of these 'dwellings in a dozen miles; and anything so bleak and wild, 'and mighty in its loneliness, as the whole country, it is impossible 'to conceive. Glencoe itself is perfectly *terrible*. The pass is an 'awful place. It is shut in on each side by enormous rocks from 'which great torrents come rushing down in all directions. In 'amongst these rocks on one side of the pass (the left as we 'came) there are scores of glens, high up, which form such haunts 'as you might imagine yourself wandering in, in the very height 'and madness of a fever. They will live in my dreams for years '—I was going to say as long as I live, and I seriously think so. 'The very recollection of them makes me shudder. . . Well, I 'will not bore you with my impressions of these tremendous wilds, 'but they really are fearful in their grandeur and amazing solitude. 'Wales is a mere toy compared with them.'

THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.

Entrance to Glencoe.

Desolate scenery.

The pass of Glencoe.

The farther mention of his guide's whimsical ways may stand, since it cannot now be the possible occasion of pain or annoyance, or of anything but very innocent laughter.

'We are here in a bare white house on the banks of Loch-leven, 'but in a comfortably furnished room on the top of the house— 'that is, on the first floor—with the rain pattering against the 'window as though it were December, the wind howling dismally, 'a cold damp mist on everything without, a blazing fire within

Loch Leven.

The Highlands: 1841.

'halfway up the chimney, and a most infernal Piper practising 'under the window for a competition of pipers which is to come 'off shortly. . . . The store of anecdotes of Fletcher with which 'we shall return, will last a long time. It seems that the F's are 'an extensive clan, and that his father was an highlander. Accord- 'ingly, wherever he goes, he finds out some cotter or small farmer 'who is his cousin. I wish you could see him walking into his 'cousin's curds and cream and into their dairies generally! 'Yesterday morning between eight and nine, I was sitting writing 'at the open window, when the postman came to the inn (which 'at Loch-earn-head is the post office) for the letters. He is going 'away, when Fletcher, who has been writing somewhere below 'stairs, rushes out and cries "Halloa there! Is that the Post?" '"Yes!" somebody answers. "Call him back!" says Fletcher: '"Just sit down till I've done, *and don't go away till I tell you.*" '—Fancy! The General Post, with the letters of forty villages in a 'leathern bag! . . . To-morrow at Oban. Sunday at Inverary. 'Monday at Tarbet. Tuesday at Glasgow (and that night at 'Hamilton). Wednesday at Melrose. Thursday at Ditto. Friday 'I don't know where. Saturday at York. Sunday—how glad I 'shall be to shake hands with you. My love to Mac. I thought 'he'd have written once. Ditto to Macready. I had a very nice 'and welcome letter from him, and a most hearty one from 'Elliotson. . . . P.S. Half asleep. So, excuse drowsiness of 'matter and composition. I shall be full of joy to meet 'another letter from you! . . . P.P.S. They speak Gaelic here, 'of course, and many of the common people understand very 'little English. Since I wrote this letter, I rang the girl up- 'stairs, and gave elaborate directions (you know my way) for a 'pint of sherry to be made into boiling negus; mentioning all the 'ingredients one by one, and particularly nutmeg. When I had 'quite finished, seeing her obviously bewildered, I said, with great 'gravity, "Now you know what you're going to order?" "Oh '"yes. Sure." "What?"—a pause—"Just"—another pause— '"Just plenty of *nutbergs!*"'

A July evening.

Postal service at Loch-earn-head.

The maid of the inn.

The impression made upon him by the Pass of Glencoe was not overstated in this letter. It continued with him; and, even

where he expected to find Nature in her most desolate grandeur on the dreary waste of an American prairie, his imagination went back with a higher satisfaction to Glencoe. But his experience of it is not yet completely told. The sequel was in a letter of two days later date from 'Dalmally, Sunday, July the eleventh, 1841.'

THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.

Effect of Glencoe.

'As there was no place of this name in our route, you will be 'surprised to see it at the head of this present writing. But our 'being here is a part of such moving accidents by flood and field 'as will astonish you. If you should happen to have your hat 'on, take it off, that your hair may stand on end without any 'interruption. To get from Ballyhoolish (as I am obliged to 'spell it when Fletcher is not in the way; and he is out at this 'moment) to Oban, it is necessary to cross two ferries, one of 'which is an arm of the sea, eight or ten miles broad. Into this 'ferry-boat, passengers, carriages, horses, and all, get bodily, and 'are got across by hook or by crook if the weather be reasonably 'fine. Yesterday morning, however, it blew such a strong gale 'that the landlord of the inn, where we had paid for horses all 'the way to Oban (thirty miles), honestly came upstairs just as 'we were starting, with the money in his hand, and told us it 'would be impossible to cross. There was nothing to be done 'but to come back five and thirty miles, through Glencoe and 'Inverouran, to a place called Tyndrum, whence a road twelve 'miles long crosses to Dalmally, which is sixteen miles from 'Inverary. Accordingly we turned back, and in a great storm 'of wind and rain began to retrace the dreary road we had come 'the day before. . . . I was not at all ill pleased to have to come 'again through that awful Glencoe. If it had been tremendous 'on the previous day, yesterday it was perfectly horrific. It had 'rained all night, and was raining then, as it only does in these 'parts. Through the whole glen, which is ten miles long, torrents 'were boiling and foaming, and sending up in every direction 'spray like the smoke of great fires. They were rushing down 'every hill and mountain side, and tearing like devils across the 'path, and down into the depths of the rocks. Some of the hills 'looked as if they were full of silver, and had cracked in a

At a place not in his route.

An adventure.

Again through Glencoe.

Torrents swollen with rain.

The Highlands: 1841.

'hundred places. Others as if they were frightened, and had 'broken out into a deadly sweat. In others there was no com- 'promise of division of streams, but one great torrent came 'roaring down with a deafening noise, and a rushing of water 'that was quite appalling. Such a *spaet*, in short (that's the 'country word), has not been known for many years, and the 'sights and sounds were beyond description. The postboy was 'not at all at his ease, and the horses were very much frightened '(as well they might be) by the perpetual raging and roaring; 'one of them started as we came down a steep place, and we 'were within that much (——) of tumbling over a precipice; 'just then, too, the drag broke, and we were obliged to go on 'as we best could, without it: getting out every now and then,

Dangerous travelling.

'and hanging on at the back of the carriage to prevent its rolling 'down too fast, and going Heaven knows where. Well, in this 'pleasant state of things we came to King's-house again, having 'been four hours doing the sixteen miles. The rumble where 'Tom sat was by this time so full of water, that he was obliged 'to borrow a gimlet, and bore holes in the bottom to let it run 'out. The horses that were to take us on, were out upon the 'hills, somewhere within ten miles round; and three or four 'bare-legged fellows went out to look for 'em, while we sat by

Incidents and accidents.

'the fire and tried to dry ourselves. At last we got off again '(without the drag and with a broken spring, no smith living 'within ten miles), and went limping on to Inverouran. In the 'first three miles we were in a ditch and out again, and lost 'a horse's shoe. All this time it never once left off raining; and 'was very windy, very cold, very misty, and most intensely 'dismal. So we crossed the Black-mount, and came to a place 'we had passed the day before, where a rapid river runs over a 'bed of broken rock. Now this river, sir, had a bridge last

Broken-down bridge.

'winter, but the bridge broke down when the thaw came, and 'has never since been mended; so travellers cross upon a little 'platform, made of rough deal planks stretching from rock to 'rock; and carriages and horses ford the water, at a certain 'point. As the platform is the reverse of steady (we had proved this the day before), is very slippery, and affords anything but

'a pleasant footing, having only a trembling little rail on one 'side, and on the other nothing between it and the foaming 'stream, Kate decided to remain in the carriage, and trust her- 'self to the wheels rather than to her feet. Fletcher and I got 'out, and it was going away, when I advised her, as I had done 'several times before, to come with us; for I saw that the water 'was very high, the current being greatly swollen by the rain, 'and that the post-boy had been eyeing it in a very disconcerted 'manner for the last half hour. This decided her to come out; 'and Fletcher, she, Tom, and I, began to cross, while the carriage 'went about a quarter of a mile down the bank, in search of a 'shallow place. The platform shook so much that we could only 'come across two at a time, and then it felt as if it were hung 'on springs. As to the wind and rain! . . . well, put into one 'gust all the wind and rain you ever saw and heard, and you'll 'have some faint notion of it! When we got safely to the 'opposite bank, there came riding up a wild highlander in a 'great plaid, whom we recognized as the landlord of the inn, and 'who without taking the least notice of us went dashing on, 'with the plaid he was wrapped in streaming in the wind, 'screeching in Gaelic to the post-boy on the opposite bank, and 'making the most frantic gestures you ever saw, in which he was 'joined by some other wild man on foot, who had come across 'by a short cut, knee deep in mire and water. As we began to 'see what this meant, we (that is, Fletcher and I) scrambled on 'after them, while the boy, horses, and carriage were plunging in 'the water, which left only the horses' heads and the boy's body 'visible.' By the time we got up to them, the man on horseback 'and the men on foot were perfectly mad with pantomime; for 'as to any of their shouts being heard by the boy, the water made 'such a great noise that they might as well have been dumb. It 'made me quite sick to think how I should have felt if Kate had 'been inside. The carriage went round and round like a great 'stone, the boy was as pale as death, the horses were struggling 'and plashing and snorting like sea-animals, and we were all roaring 'to the driver to throw himself off and let them and the coach 'go to the devil, when suddenly it came all right (having got into

THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.

A fortunate resolve.

Post-boy in danger.

The rescue

The Highlands: 1841.

'shallow water), and, all tumbling and dripping and jogging from 'side to side, climbed up to the dry land. I assure you we looked 'rather queer, as we wiped our faces and stared at each other in 'a little cluster round about it. It seemed that the man on 'horseback had been looking at us through a telescope as we 'came to the track, and knowing that the place was very dan-'gerous, and seeing that we meant to bring the carriage, had 'come on at a great gallop to show the driver the only place

Narrow escape.

'where he could cross. By the time he came up, the man had 'taken the water at a wrong place, and in a word was as nearly 'drowned (with carriage, horses, luggage, and all) as ever man 'was. Was *this* a good adventure?

'We all went on to the inn—the wild man galloping on first, to 'get a fire lighted—and there we dined on eggs and bacon, oat-'cake, and whiskey; and changed and dried ourselves. The 'place was a mere knot of little outhouses, and in one of these

Highland inn and inmates.

'there were fifty highlanders *all drunk*. . . . Some were drovers, 'some pipers, and some workmen engaged to build a hunting-'lodge for Lord Breadalbane hard by, who had been driven in 'by stress of weather. One was a paper-hanger. He had come 'out three days before to paper the inn's best room, a chamber 'almost large enough to keep a Newfoundland dog in; and, from 'the first half hour after his arrival to that moment, had been 'hopelessly and irreclaimably drunk. They were lying about in 'all directions: on forms, on the ground, about a loft overhead, 'round the turf-fire wrapped in plaids, on the tables, and under 'them. We paid our bill, thanked our host very heartily, gave 'some money to his children, and after an hour's rest came on 'again. At ten o'clock at night, we reached this place, and were

English comfort at Dalmally.

'overjoyed to find quite an English inn, with good beds (those 'we have slept on, yet, have always been of straw), and every 'possible comfort. We breakfasted this morning at half-past ten, 'and at three go on to Inverary to dinner. I believe the very 'rough part of the journey is over, and I am really glad of it. 'Kate sends all kinds of regards. I shall hope to find a letter 'from you at Inverary when the post reaches there, to-morrow. 'I wrote to Oban yesterday, desiring the post-office keeper

'to send any he might have for us, over to that place. Love to 'Mac.' THE HIGHLANDS: 1841.

One more letter, brief but overflowing at every word with his generous nature, must close the delightful series written from Scotland. It was dated from Inverary the day following his exciting adventure; promised me another from Melrose (which has unfortunately not been kept with the rest); and enclosed the invitation to a public dinner at Glasgow. 'I have returned 'for answer that I am on my way home, on pressing business 'connected with my weekly publication, and can't stop. But I 'have offered to come down any day in September or October, Dinner at Glasgow proposed. 'and accept the honour then. Now, I shall come and return per 'mail; and if this suits them, enter into a solemn league and 'covenant to come with me. *Do.* You must. I am sure you 'will. . . . Till my next, and always afterwards, God bless you. 'I got your welcome letter this morning, and have read it a 'hundred times. What a pleasure it is. Kate's best regards. I Impatience for home. 'am dying for Sunday, and wouldn't stop now for twenty dinners 'of twenty thousand each.

always your affectionate friend

D R.

'Will Lord John meet the parliament, or resign first?' I agreed to accompany him to Glasgow; but illness intercepted that celebration.

XII.

AGAIN AT BROADSTAIRS.

1841.

Broad-stairs: 1841.

Soon after his return, at the opening of August, he went to Broadstairs; and the direction in which that last question shows his thoughts to have been busy, was that to which he turned his first holiday leisure. He sent me some rhymed squibs as his anonymous contribution to the fight the liberals were then making, against what was believed to be intended by the return to office of the tories; ignorant as we were how much wiser than his party the statesman then at the head of it was, or how greatly what we all most desired would be advanced by the very success that had been most disheartening. There will be no harm now in giving extracts from one or two of these pieces, which will sufficiently show the tone of all of them, and with what relish they were written. A celebrated address had been delivered at Tamworth, in which the orator, though in those days big with nothing much larger or graver than a sliding-scale, had made a mystery of it as an infallible specific for public affairs which he refused to prescribe till regularly called in; and this was good-humouredly laughed at in a quack-doctor's proclamation, to the tune of 'A Cobbler there was.'

Peel and his party

Quack doctor's proclamation.

He's a famous corn-doctor, of wonderful skill—
No cutting, no rooting up, purging, or pill—
You're merely to take, 'stead of walking or riding,
The light schoolboy exercise, innocent sliding.
Tol de rol, &c.

There's no advice gratis. If high ladies send
His legitimate fee, he's their soft-spoken friend.
At the great public counter with one hand behind him
And one in his waistcoat, they're certain to find him.
Tol de rol, &c.

He has only to add he's the true Doctor Flam,
All others being purely fictitious and sham;
The house is a large one, tall, slated, and white,
With a lobby, and lights in the passage at night.
Tol de rol, diddle doll, &c.

BROADSTAIRS 1841.

I doubt if he ever enjoyed anything more than the power of thus taking part occasionally, unknown to outsiders, in the sharp conflict the press was waging at the time. 'By Jove how radical I am 'getting!' he wrote to me (13th August). 'I wax stronger and 'stronger in the true principles every day. I don't know whether 'it's the sea, or no, but so it is.' He would at times even talk, in moments of sudden indignation at the political outlook, of carrying off himself and his household gods, like Coriolanus, to a world elsewhere! 'Thank God there is a Van Diemen's-land. 'That's my comfort. Now, I wonder if I should make a good 'settler! I wonder, if I went to a new colony with my head, 'hands, legs, and health, I should force myself to the top of the 'social milk-pot and live upon the cream! What do you think? 'Upon my word I believe I should.'

Thoughts of colonizing.

Among his political squibs during the tory interregnum were some subjects for pictures after the manner of Peter Pindar, of which one or two stanzas will show the tone and spirit.

To you, Maclise, who Eve's fair daughters paint
With Nature's hand, and want the maudlin taint
Of the sweet Chalon school of silk and ermine:
To you, O Landseer, who from year to year
Delight in beasts and birds, and dogs and deer,
And seldom give us any human vermin—

To all who practise art, or make believe,
I offer subjects they may take or leave.
* * *

Subjects for pictures.

Paint, squandering the Club's election gold,
Fierce lovers of the Constitution old,
Our Lords, that sacred lady's greatest debtors;
And let the Law forbidding any voice
Or act of Peer to influence the choice
Of English people, flourish in bright letters.

Broadstairs: 1841.

Paint that same dear old lady ill at ease,
Weak in her second childhood, hard to please,
Unknowing what she ails or what she wishes;
With all her Carlton nephews at the door,
Deaf'ning both aunt and nurses with their roar—
Fighting, already, for the loaves and fishes!

The last of these rhymes I will give entire. This had no touch of personal satire in it, and he would himself, for that reason, have least objected to its revival. Thus ran his new version of 'The Fine Old English Gentleman, to be said or sung at all 'conservative dinners.'

I'll sing you a new ballad, and I'll warrant it first-rate,
Of the days of that old gentleman who had that old estate;
When they spent the public money at a bountiful old rate
On ev'ry mistress, pimp, and scamp, at ev'ry noble gate,
In the fine old English Tory times;
Soon may they come again!

The good old laws were garnished well with gibbets, whips, and chains,
With fine old English penalties, and fine old English pains,
With rebel heads and seas of blood once hot in rebel veins;
For all these things were requisite to guard the rich old gains
Of the fine old English Tory times;
Soon may they come again!

Fine old Tory gentleman.

This brave old code, like Argus, had a hundred watchful eyes,
And ev'ry English peasant had his good old English spies,
To tempt his starving discontent with fine old English lies
Then call the good old Yeomanry to stop his peevish cries,
In the fine old English Tory times;
Soon may they come again!

The good old times for cutting throats that cried out in their need,
The good old times for hunting men who held their fathers' creed,
The good old times when William Pitt, as all good men agreed,
Came down direct from Paradise at more than railroad speed. . . .
Oh the fine old English Tory times;
When will they come again!

In those rare days, the press was seldom known to snarl or bark,
But sweetly sang of men in pow'r, like any tuneful lark;
Grave judges, too, to all their evil deeds were in the dark;
And not a man in twenty score knew how to make his mark.
Oh the fine old English Tory times;
Soon may they come again! . . .

BROADSTAIRS: 1841.

But Tolerance, though slow in flight, is strong-wing'd in the main;
That night must come on these fine days, in course of time was plain;
The pure old spirit struggled, but its struggles were in vain;
A nation's grip was on it, and it died in choaking pain,
With the fine old English Tory days,
All of the olden time.

The bright old day now dawns again; the cry runs through the land,
In England there shall be—dear bread! in Ireland—sword and brand!
And poverty, and ignorance, shall swell the rich and grand,
So, rally round the rulers with the gentle iron hand,
Of the fine old English Tory days;
Hail to the coming time!

LONDON: 1841.

Mesmerism.

Metropolitan prisons.

Of matters in which he had been specially interested before he quitted London, one or two may properly be named. He had always sympathised, almost as strongly as Archbishop Whately did, with Doctor Elliotson's mesmeric investigations; and, reinforced as these were in the present year by the displays of a Belgian youth whom another friend, Mr. Chauncy Hare Townshend, brought over to England, the subject, which to the last had an attraction for him, was for the time rather ardently followed up. The improvement during the last few years in the London prisons was another matter of eager and pleased enquiry with him; and he took frequent means of stating what in this respect had been done, since even the date when his *Sketches* were written, by two most efficient public officers at Clerkenwell and Tothill-fields, Mr. Chesterton and Lieutenant Tracey, whom the course of these enquiries turned into private friends. His last letter to me before he quitted town sufficiently explains itself. 'Slow rises worth by 'poverty deprest' was the thought in his mind at every part of his career, and he never for a moment was unmindful of the duty it imposed upon him. 'I subscribed for a couple of copies' (31st July) 'of this little book. I knew nothing of the man, but 'he wrote me a very modest letter of two lines, some weeks ago. 'I have been much affected by the little biography at the 'beginning, and I thought you would like to share the emotion it 'had raised in me. I wish we were all in Eden again—for the 'sake of these toiling creatures.'

Broadstairs: 1841.

In the middle of August (Monday 16th) I had announcement that he was coming up for special purposes. 'I sit down to write 'to you without an atom of news to communicate. Yes I have '—something that will surprise you, who are pent up in dark and 'dismal Lincoln's-inn-fields. It is the brightest day you ever saw. 'The sun is sparkling on the water so that I can hardly bear to 'look at it. The tide is in, and the fishing boats are dancing like 'mad. Upon the green-topped cliffs the corn is cut and piled in 'shocks; and thousands of butterflies are fluttering about, taking

A day in August by the sea.

'the bright little red flags at the mast-heads for flowers, and 'panting with delight accordingly. [Here the Inimitable, unable 'to resist the brilliancy out of doors, breaketh off, rusheth to the 'machines, and plungeth into the sea. Returning, he proceedeth:] 'Jeffrey is just as he was when he wrote the letter I sent you. 'No better, and no worse. I had a letter from Napier on 'Saturday, urging the children's-labour subject upon me. But, 'as I hear from Southwood Smith that the report cannot be 'printed until the new parliament has sat at the least six weeks, it 'will be impossible to produce it before the January number. I 'shall be in town on Saturday morning, and go straight to you.

Another story in prospect.

'A letter has come from little Hall begging that when I *do* come 'to town I will dine there, as they wish to talk about the new 'story. I have written to say that I will do so on Saturday, and 'we will go together; but I shall be by no means good company. '. . . . I have more than half a mind to start a bookseller of my 'own. I could; with good capital too, as you know; and ready 'to spend it. *G. Varden beware!*'

'Clock' discontents.

Small causes of displeasure had been growing out of the *Clock*, and were almost unavoidably incident to the position in which he found himself respecting it. Its discontinuance had become necessary, the strain upon himself being too great without the help from others which experience had shown to be impracticable; but I thought he had not met the difficulty wisely by undertaking, which already he had done, to begin a new story so early as the following March. On his arrival therefore we decided on another plan, with which we went armed that Saturday afternoon to his publishers; and of which the result will be best told by himself.

New adventure.

He had returned to Broadstairs the following morning, and next day (Monday the 23rd of August) he wrote to me in very enthusiastic terms of the share I had taken in what he calls 'the development on Saturday afternoon; when I thought Chapman 'very manly and sensible, Hall morally and physically feeble 'though perfectly well intentioned, and both the statement and 'reception of the project quite triumphant. Didn't you think so 'too?' A fortnight later, Tuesday the 7th of September, the agreement was signed in my chambers, and its terms were to the effect following. The *Clock* was to cease with the close of *Barnaby Rudge*, the respective ownerships continuing as provided; and the new work in twenty numbers, similar to those of *Pickwick* and *Nickleby*, was not to begin until after an interval of twelve months, in November 1842. During its publication he was to receive £200 monthly, to be accounted as part of the expenses; for all which, and all risks incident, the publishers made themselves responsible, under conditions the same as in the *Clock* agreement; except that, out of the profits of each number, they were to have only a fourth, three fourths going to him, and this arrangement was to hold good until the termination of six months from the completed book, when, upon payment to him of a fourth of the value of all existing stock, they were to have half the future interest. During the twelve months' interval before the book began, he was to be paid £150 each month; but this was to be drawn from his three fourths of the profits, and in no way to interfere with the monthly payments of £200 while the publication was going on. Such was the 'project,' excepting only a provision to be mentioned hereafter against the improbable event of the profits being inadequate to the repayment; and some fear as to the use he was likely to make of the leisure it afforded him seemed to me its only drawback.

BROADSTAIRS: 1841.

Agreement for it signed.

Terms.

The book that was to be *Chuzzlewit*.

That this fear was not illfounded appeared at the close of his next letter. 'There's no news' (13th September) 'since my last. 'We are going to dine with Rogers to-day, and with Lady Essex, 'who is also here. Rogers is much pleased with Lord Ashley, 'who was offered by Peel a post in the government, but resolutely

BROADSTAIRS: 1841.

Peel and Lord Ashley.

'refused to take office unless Peel pledged himself to factory 'improvement. Peel "hadn't made up his mind"; and Lord 'Ashley was deaf to all other inducements, though they must 'have been very tempting. Much do I honour him for it. I 'am in an exquisitely lazy state, bathing, walking, reading, 'lying in the sun, doing everything but working. This frame 'of mind is superinduced by the prospect of rest, and the 'promising arrangements which I owe to you. I am still

Visions of America.

'haunted by visions of America, night and day. To miss this 'opportunity would be a sad thing. Kate cries dismally if I 'mention the subject. But, God willing, I think it *must* be 'managed somehow!'

BOOK THIRD.

AMERICA.

1841—1842. ÆT. 29—30.

I. EVE OF THE VISIT.
II. FIRST IMPRESSIONS.
III. SECOND IMPRESSIONS.
IV. PHILADELPHIA AND THE SOUTH.
V. CANAL-BOAT JOURNEYS.
VI. FAR WEST: TO NIAGARA FALLS.
VII. NIAGARA AND MONTREAL.
VIII. AMERICAN NOTES.

I.

EVE OF THE VISIT.

1841.

THE notion of America was in his mind, as we have seen, when he first projected the *Clock*, and a very hearty letter from Washington Irving about little Nell and the *Curiosity Shop*, expressing the delight with his writings and the yearnings himself which had indeed been pouring in upon him for some time from every part of the States, had very strongly revived it. He answered Irving with more than his own warmth: unable to thank him enough for his cordial and generous praise, or to tell him what lasting gratification it had given. 'I wish I could find in your 'welcome letter,' he added, 'some hint of an intention to visit 'England. I should love to go with you, as I have gone, God 'knows how often, into Little-britain, and East-cheap, and Green-'arbour-court, and Westminster-abbey. . . . It would gladden my 'heart to compare notes with you about all those delightful places 'and people that I used to walk about and dream of in the day 'time, when a very small and not-over-particularly-taken-care-of 'boy.' After interchange of these letters the subject was frequently revived; upon his return from Scotland it began to take shape as a thing that somehow or other, at no very distant date, *must be;* and at last, near the end of a letter filled with many unimportant things, the announcement, doubly underlined, came to me.

BROADSTAIRS: 1841.

Greetings from America.

Reply to Washington Irving.

The decision once taken, he was in his usual fever until its difficulties were disposed of. The objections to separation from the children led at first to the notion of taking them, but this was as quickly abandoned; and what remained to be overcome yielded readily to the kind offices of Macready, the offer of whose home to the little ones during the time of absence, though not accepted to the full extent, gave yet the assurance needed to quiet natural apprehensions. All this, including an arrangement for

Broadstairs: 1841.

publication of such notes as might occur to him on the journey, took but a few days; and I was reading in my chambers a letter he had written the previous day from Broadstairs, when a note from him reached me, written that morning in London, to tell me he was on his way to take share of my breakfast. He had come overland by Canterbury after posting his first letter; had seen Macready the previous night; and had completed some part of the arrangements. This mode of rapid procedure was characteristic of him at all similar times, and will appear in the few following extracts from his letters.

'Now' (19th September) 'to astonish you. After balancing, 'considering, and weighing the matter in every point of view, 'I HAVE MADE UP MY MIND (WITH GOD'S LEAVE) TO GO TO 'AMERICA—AND TO START AS SOON AFTER CHRISTMAS AS IT 'WILL BE SAFE TO GO.' Further information was promised immediately; and a request followed, characteristic as any he could have added to his design of travelling so far away, that we should visit once more together the scenes of his boyhood. 'On 'the ninth of October we leave here. It's a Saturday. If it 'should be fine dry weather, or anything like it, will you meet us 'at Rochester, and stop there two or three days to see all the 'lions in the surrounding country? Think of this .... If you'll 'arrange to come, I'll have the carriage down, and Topping; 'and, supposing news from Glasgow don't interfere with us, which 'I fervently hope it will not, I will ensure that we have much 'enjoyment.'

Resolve to go to America.

Wish to revisit scenes of boyhood.

Three days later than that which announced his resolve, the subject was resumed. 'I wrote to Chapman and Hall asking 'them what they thought of it, and saying I meant to keep a 'note-book, and publish it for half a guinea or thereabouts, on 'my return. They instantly sent the warmest possible reply, and 'said they had taken it for granted I would go, and had been 'speaking of it only the day before. I have begged them to 'make every enquiry about the fares, cabins, berths, and times of 'sailing; and I shall make a great effort to take Kate *and* the 'children. In that case I shall try to let the house furnished, for 'six months (for I shall remain that time in America); and if I

Proposed book about the States.

'succeed, the rent will nearly pay the expenses out, and home. BROADSTAIRS: 1841
'I have heard of family cabins at £100; and I think one of
'these is large enough to hold us all. A single fare, I think, is
'forty guineas. I fear I could not be happy if we had the Arrangements for the journey.
'Atlantic between us; but leaving them in New York while I
'ran off a thousand miles or so, would be quite another thing.
'If I can arrange all my plans before publishing the *Clock* address,
'I shall state therein that I am going: which will be no unim-
'portant consideration, as affording the best possible reason for a
'long delay. How I am to get on without you for seven or eight
'months, I cannot, upon my soul, conceive. I dread to think of
'breaking up all our old happy habits, for so long a time. The
'advantages of going, however, appear by steady looking-at so
'great, that I have come to persuade myself it is a matter of
'imperative necessity. Kate weeps whenever it is spoken of.
'Washington Irving has got a nasty low fever. I heard from him
'a day or two ago.'

His next letter was the unexpected arrival which came by hand LONDON.
from Devonshire-terrace, when I thought him still by the sea.
'This is to give you notice that I am coming to breakfast with
'you this morning on my way to Broadstairs. I repeat it, sir,—
'on my way *to* Broadstairs. For, directly I got Macready's note
'yesterday I went to Canterbury, and came on by day-coach for
'the express purpose of talking with him; which I did between
'11 and 12 last night in Clarence-terrace. The American pre-
'liminaries are necessarily startling, and, to a gentleman of my Impatience of suspense.
'temperament, destroy rest, sleep, appetite, and work, unless
'definitely arranged. Macready has quite decided me in respect
'of time and so forth. The instant I have wrung a reluctant
'consent from Kate, I shall take our joint passage in the mail-
'packet for next January. I never loved my friends so well as
'now.' We had all discountenanced his first thought of taking
the children; and, upon this and other points, the experience of
our friend who had himself travelled over the States was very
valuable. His next letter, two days later from Broadstairs, in- Resolve leave the children.
formed me of the result of the Macready conference. 'Only a
'word. Kate is quite reconciled. Anne' (her maid) 'goes, and

Broadstairs: 1841.

'is amazingly cheerful and light of heart upon it. And I think, 'at present, that it's a greater trial to me than anybody. The 4th 'of January is the day. Macready's note to Kate was received 'and acted upon with a perfect response. She talks about it 'quite gaily, and is satisfied to have nobody in the house but 'Fred, of whom, as you know, they are all fond. He has got 'his promotion, and they give him the increased salary from 'the day on which the minute was made by Baring. I feel so 'amiable, so meek, so fond of people, so full of gratitudes and 'reliances, that I am like a sick man. And I am already counting 'the days between this and coming home again.'

Mrs. Dickens reconciled.

Rochester.

He was soon, alas! to be what he compared himself to. I met him at Rochester at the end of September, as arranged; we passed a day and night there; a day and night in Cobham and its neighbourhood, sleeping at the Leather-bottle; and a day and night at Gravesend. But we were hardly returned when some slight symptoms of bodily trouble took suddenly graver form, and an illness followed involving the necessity of surgical attendance. This, which with mention of the helpful courage displayed by him has before been alluded to, put off necessarily the Glasgow dinner; and he had scarcely left his bedroom when a trouble arose near home which touched him to the depths of the greatest sorrow of his life, and, in the need of exerting himself for others, what remained of his own illness seemed to pass away.

A grave illness.

Domestic griefs.

His wife's younger brother had died with the same unexpected suddenness that attended her younger sister's death; and the event had followed close upon the decease of Mrs. Hogarth's mother while on a visit to her daughter and Mr. Hogarth. 'As 'no steps had been taken towards the funeral,' he wrote (25th October) in reply to my offer of such service as I could render, 'I thought it best at once to bestir myself; and not even you 'could have saved my going to the cemetery. It is a great trial 'to me to give up Mary's grave; greater than I can possibly 'express. I thought of moving her to the catacombs and saying 'nothing about it; but then I remembered that the poor old lady 'is buried next her at her own desire, and could not find it in my 'heart, directly she is laid in the earth, to take her grandchild

'away. The desire to be buried next her is as strong upon me 'now, as it was five years ago; and I *know* (for I don't think 'there ever was love like that I bear her) that it will never 'diminish. I fear I can do nothing. Do you think I can? 'They would move her on Wednesday, if I resolved to have it 'done. I cannot bear the thought of being excluded from her 'dust; and yet I feel that her brothers and sisters, and her 'mother, have a better right than I to be placed beside her. It 'is but an idea. I neither think nor hope (God forbid) that our 'spirits would ever mingle *there*. I ought to get the better of 'it, but it is very hard. I never contemplated this—and coming 'so suddenly, and after being ill, it disturbs me more than it 'ought. It seems like losing her a second time . . . .' 'No,' he wrote the morning after, 'I tried that. No, there is no ground on 'either side to be had. I must give it up. I shall drive over 'there, please God, on Thursday morning, before they get there; 'and look at her coffin.'

LONDON: 1841. The old sorrow.

He suffered more than he let any one perceive, and was obliged again to keep his room for some days. On the second of November he reported himself as progressing and ordered to Richmond, which, after a week or so, he changed to the White-hart at Windsor, where I passed some days with him and Mrs. Dickens, and her younger sister Georgina; but it was not till near the close of that month he could describe himself as thoroughly on his legs again, in the ordinary state on which he was wont to pride himself, bolt upright, staunch at the knees, a deep sleeper, a hearty eater, a good laugher; and nowhere a bit the worse, ''bating a little weakness now and then, and a slight 'nervousness at times.'

At Windsor.

We had some days of much enjoyment at the end of the year, when Landor came up from Bath for the christening of his godson; and the 'Britannia,' which was to take the travellers from us in January, brought over to them in December all sorts of cordialities, anticipations, and stretchings-forth of hands, in token of the welcome awaiting them. On new-year's-eve they dined with me, and I with them on new-year's-day; when (his house having been taken for the period of his absence by General Sir

Christening of Walter.

London 1841.

John Wilson) we sealed up his wine cellar, after opening therein some sparkling Moselle in honour of the ceremony, and drinking it then and there to his happy return. Next morning (it was a Sunday) I accompanied them to Liverpool, Maclise having been suddenly stayed by his mother's death; the intervening day and its occupations have been humorously sketched in his American book; and on the fourth they sailed. I never saw the Britannia after I stepped from her deck back to the small steamer that had taken us to her. 'How little I thought' (were the last lines of his first American letter), 'the first time you mounted the 'shapeless coat, that I should have such a sad association with 'its back as when I saw it by the paddle-box of that small 'steamer.'

Adieus.

II.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.

1842.

Banks of Newfoundland: 1842.

THE first lines of that letter were written as soon as he got sight of earth again, from the banks of Newfoundland, on Monday the seventeenth of January, the fourteenth day from their departure: even then so far from Halifax that they could not expect to make it before Wednesday night, or to reach Boston until Saturday or Sunday. They had not been fortunate in the passage. During the whole voyage, the weather had been unprecedentedly bad, the wind for the most part dead against them, the wet intolerable, the sea horribly disturbed, the days dark, and the nights fearful. On the previous Monday night it had blown a hurricane, beginning at five in the afternoon and raging all night. His description of the storm is published, and the peculiarities of a steamer's behaviour in such circumstances are hit off as if he had been all his life a sailor. Any but so extraordinary an observer would have described a steamer in a storm as he would have described a sailing-ship in a storm. But any description of the latter would be as inapplicable to my friend's account

Rough passage.

A steamer in a storm.

of the other as the ways of a jackass to those of a mad bull. In the letter from which it was taken, however, there were some things addressed to myself alone. 'For two or three hours we 'gave it up as a lost thing; and with many thoughts of you, and 'the children, and those others who are dearest to us, waited 'quietly for the worst. I never expected to see the day 'again, and resigned myself to God as well as I could. It was 'a great comfort to think of the earnest and devoted friends 'we had left behind, and to know that the darlings would not 'want.' NEWFOUNDLAND: 1842. Resigned to the worst.

This was not the exaggerated apprehension of a landsman merely. The head engineer, who had been in one or other of the Cunard vessels since they began running, had never seen such stress of weather; and I heard Captain Hewitt himself say afterwards that nothing but a steamer, and one of that strength, could have kept her course and stood it out. A sailing vessel must have beaten off and driven where she could; while through all the fury of that gale they actually made fifty-four miles headlong through the tempest, straight on end, not varying their track in the least. Right onward.

He stood out against sickness only for the day following that on which they sailed. For the three following days he kept his bed; miserable enough; and had not, until the eighth day of the voyage, six days before the date of his letter, been able to get to work at the dinner table. What he then observed of his fellow-travellers, and had to tell of their life on board, has been set forth in his *Notes* with delightful humour; but in its first freshness I received it in this letter, and some whimsical passages, then suppressed, there will be no harm in printing now. Of his fellow-travellers.

'We have 86 passengers; and such a strange collection of 'beasts never was got together upon the sea, since the days of 'the Ark. I have never been in the saloon since the first day; 'the noise, the smell, and the closeness being quite intolerable. 'I have only been on deck *once!*—and then I was surprised and 'disappointed at the smallness of the panorama. The sea, 'running as it does and has done, is very stupendous, and 'viewed from the air or some great height would be grand no The Atlantic from deck.

Newfoundland: 1842.

'doubt. But seen from the wet and rolling decks, in this 'weather and these circumstances, it only impresses one giddily 'and painfully. I was very glad to turn away, and come below 'again.

'I have established myself, from the first, in the ladies' cabin— 'you remember it? I'll describe its other occupants, and our 'way of passing the time, to you.

The ladies' cabin.

'First, for the occupants. Kate, and I, and Anne—when she 'is out of bed, which is not often. A queer little Scotch body, a 'Mrs. P—,* whose husband is a silversmith in New York. He 'married her at Glasgow three years ago, and bolted the day 'after the wedding; being (which he had not told her) heavily 'in debt. Since then she has been living with her mother; and 'she is now going out under the protection of a male cousin, to 'give him a year's trial. If she is not comfortable at the expira- 'tion of that time, she means to go back to Scotland again. A 'Mrs. B—, about twenty years old, whose husband is on board 'with her. He is a young Englishman domiciled in New York, 'and by trade (as well as I can make out) a woollen-draper. 'They have been married a fortnight. A Mr. and Mrs. C—, 'marvellously fond of each other, complete the catalogue. Mrs.

Occupants of ladies' cabin.

'C— I have settled, is a publican's daughter, and Mr. C— is 'running away with her, the till, the time-piece off the bar mantel- 'shelf, the mother's gold watch from the pocket at the head of 'the bed; and other miscellaneous property. The women are 'all pretty; unusually pretty. I never saw such good faces 'together, anywhere.'

Their 'way of passing the time' will be found in the *Notes* much as it was written to me; except that there was one point connected with the card-playing which he feared might overtax the credulity of his readers, but which he protested had occurred more than once. 'Apropos of rolling, I have forgotten to men- 'tion that in playing whist we are obliged to put the tricks in our

Card-playing on the Atlantic.

* The initials used here are in no case those of the real names, being employed in every case for the express purpose of disguising the names. Generally the remark is applicable to all initials used in the letters printed in the course of this work. The exceptions are unimportant.

'pockets, to keep them from disappearing altogether; and that NEWFOUNDLAND: 1842.
'five or six times in the course of every rubber we are all flung
'from our seats, roll out at different doors, and keep on rolling
'until we are picked up by stewards. This has become such a
'matter of course, that we go through it with perfect gravity;
'and when we are bolstered up on our sofas again, resume our
'conversation or our game at the point where it was interrupted.'
The news that excited them from day to day, too, of which little more than a hint appears in the *Notes*, is worth giving as originally written.

'As for news, we have more of that than you would think for.
'One man lost fourteen pounds at vingt-un in the saloon yester-
'day, or another got drunk before dinner was over, or another Ship-news.
'was blinded with lobster sauce spilt over him by the steward, or
'another had a fall on deck and fainted. The ship's cook was
'drunk yesterday morning (having got at some salt-water-damaged
'whiskey), and the captain ordered the boatswain to play upon him
'with the hose of the fire engine until he roared for mercy—which Cook in disgrace.
'he didn't get; for he was sentenced to look out, for four hours
'at a stretch for four nights running, without a great coat, and to
'have his grog stopped. Four dozen plates were broken at
'dinner. One steward fell down the cabin-stairs with a round of
'beef, and injured his foot severely. Another steward fell down
'after him, and cut his eye open. The baker's taken ill: so is
'the pastry-cook. A new man, sick to death, has been required
'to fill the place of the latter officer, and has been dragged out of
'bed and propped up in a little house upon deck, between two
'casks, and ordered (the captain standing over him) to make and
'roll out pie-crust; which he protests, with tears in his eyes, it is Cook malgré lui.
'death to him in his bilious state to look at. Twelve dozen of
'bottled porter has got loose upon deck, and the bottles are
'rolling about distractedly, over-head. Lord Mulgrave (a hand-
'some fellow, by the bye, to look at, and nothing but a good 'un
'to go) laid a wager with twenty-five other men last night, whose
'berths, like his, are in the fore-cabin which can only be got at
'by crossing the deck, that he would reach his cabin first. Watches
'were set by the captain's, and they sallied forth, wrapped up in

NEWFOUNDLAND: 1842.

'coats and storm caps The sea broke over the ship so violently, 'that they were *five and twenty minutes* holding on by the hand-'rail at the starboard paddle-box, drenched to the skin by every 'wave, and not daring to go on or come back, lest they should 'be washed overboard. News! A dozen murders in town 'wouldn't interest us half as much.'

Nevertheless their excitements were not over. At the very end of the voyage came an incident very lightly touched in the *Notes*, but more freely told to me under date of the 21st January. 'We

Halifax harbour.

'were running into Halifax-harbour on Wednesday night, with 'little wind and a bright moon; had made the light at its outer 'entrance, and given the ship in charge to the pilot; were playing 'our rubber, all in good spirits (for it had been comparatively 'smooth for some days, with tolerably dry decks and other

Ship aground.

'unusual comforts), when suddenly the ship STRUCK! A rush 'upon deck followed of course. The men (I mean the crew! 'think of this) were kicking off their shoes and throwing off their 'jackets preparatory to swimming ashore; the pilot was beside 'himself; the passengers dismayed; and everything in the most 'intolerable confusion and hurry. Breakers were roaring ahead; 'the land within a couple of hundred yards; and the vessel 'driving upon the surf, although her paddles were worked back-'wards, and everything done to stay her course. It is not the 'custom of steamers, it seems, to have an anchor ready. An 'accident occurred in getting ours over the sides; and for half an 'hour we were throwing up rockets, burning blue lights, and firing

Signals of distress.

'signals of distress, all of which remained unanswered, though we 'were so close to the shore that we could see the waving branches 'of the trees. All this time, as we veered about, a man was 'heaving the lead every two minutes; the depths of water con-'stantly decreasing; and nobody self-possessed but Hewitt. They 'let go the anchor at last, got out a boat, and sent her ashore 'with the fourth officer, the pilot, and four men aboard, to try 'and find out where we were. The pilot had no idea; but

Captain Hewitt.

'Hewitt put his little finger upon a certain part of the chart, 'and was as confident of the exact spot (though he had never 'been there in his life) as if he had lived there from infancy.

'The boat's return about an hour afterwards proved him to Halifax Harbour; 1842.
'be quite right. We had got into a place called the Eastern-
'passage, in a sudden fog and through the pilot's folly. We had
'struck upon a mud-bank, and driven into a perfect little pond,
'surrounded by banks and rocks and shoals of all kinds: the
'only safe speck in the place. Eased by this report, and the
'assurance that the tide was past the ebb, we turned in at three
'o'clock in the morning, to lie there all night.'

The next day's landing at Halifax, and delivery of the mails, Halifax.
are sketched in the *Notes;* but not his personal part in what followed. 'Then, sir, comes a breathless man who has been
'already into the ship and out again, shouting my name as he
'tears along. I stop, arm in arm with the little doctor whom I
'have taken ashore for oysters. The breathless man introduces
'himself as The Speaker of the house of assembly; *will* drag me
'away to his house; and *will* have a carriage and his wife sent
'down for Kate, who is laid up with a hideously swoln face. Then
'he drags me up to the Governor's house (Lord Falkland is the
'governor), and then Heaven knows where; concluding with
'both houses of parliament, which happen to meet for the session
'that very day, and are opened by a mock speech from the throne
'delivered by the governor, with one of Lord Grey's sons for his An ovation.
'aide-de-camp, and a great host of officers about him. I wish
'you could have seen the crowds cheering the inimitable * in the
'streets. I wish you could have seen judges, law-officers, bishops,
'and law-makers welcoming the inimitable. I wish you could In the house of assembly.
'have seen the inimitable shown to a great elbow-chair by the
'Speaker's throne, and sitting alone in the middle of the floor of
'the house of commons, the observed of all observers, listening
'with exemplary gravity to the queerest speaking possible, and
'breaking in spite of himself into a smile as he thought of this
'commencement to the Thousand and One stories in reserve for
'home and Lincoln's-inn-fields and Jack Straw's-castle. — Ah,
'Forster! when I *do* come back again!——'

He resumed his letter at Tremont-house on Saturday the 28th Boston.

* This word, applied to him by his old master, Mr. Giles (*ante*, p. 12), was for a long time the epithet we called him by.

Boston: 1842.

of January, having reached Boston that day week at five in the afternoon; and as his first American experience is very lightly glanced at in the *Notes*, a fuller picture will perhaps be welcome. 'As the Cunard boats have a wharf of their own at the custom-'house, and that a narrow one, we were a long time (an hour at 'least) working in. I was standing in full fig on the paddle-box 'beside the captain, staring about me, when suddenly, long before 'we were moored to the wharf, a dozen men came leaping on 'board at the peril of their lives, with great bundles of news-'papers under their arms; worsted comforters (very much the 'worse for wear) round their necks; and so forth. "Aha!" says 'I, "this is like our London-bridge": believing of course that 'these visitors were news-boys. But what do you think of their

Incursion of editors.

'being EDITORS? And what do you think of their tearing 'violently up to me and beginning to shake hands like mad-'men? Oh! If you could have seen how I wrung their wrists! 'And if you could but know how I hated one man in very dirty 'gaiters, and with very protruding upper teeth, who said to all 'comers after him, "So you've been introduced to our friend '"Dickens—eh?" There was one among them, though, who 'really was of use; a Doctor S, editor of the ——. He ran 'off here (two miles at least), and ordered rooms and dinner. 'And in course of time Kate, and I, and Lord Mulgrave (who

At Tremont-house.

'was going back to his regiment at Montreal on Monday, and 'had agreed to live with us in the meanwhile) sat down in a 'spacious and handsome room to a very handsome dinner, 'bating 'peculiarities of putting on table, and had forgotten the ship 'entirely. A Mr. Alexander, to whom I had written from 'England, promising to sit for a portrait, was on board directly 'we touched the land, and brought us here in his carriage. 'Then, after sending a present of most beautiful flowers, he 'left us to ourselves, and we thanked him for it.'

What further he had to say of that week's experience, finds its first public utterance here. 'How can I tell you,' he continues,

The welcome.

'what has happened since that first day? How can I give you 'the faintest notion of my reception here; of the crowds that 'pour in and out the whole day; of the people that line the

'streets when I go out; of the cheering when I went to the theatre; of the copies of verses, letters of congratulation, welcomes of all kinds, balls, dinners, assemblies without end? BOSTON: 1842.

'There is to be a public dinner to me here in Boston, next Tuesday, and great dissatisfaction has been given to the many by the high price (three pounds sterling each) of the tickets. Proposed dinners and balls.

'There is to be a ball next Monday week at New York, and 150 names appear on the list of the committee. There is to be a dinner in the same place, in the same week, to which I have had an invitation with every known name in America appended to it. But what can I tell you about any of these things which will give you the slightest notion of the enthusiastic greeting they give me, or the cry that runs through the whole country!

'I have had deputations from the Far West, who have come from more than two thousand miles distance: from the lakes, the rivers, the back-woods, the log-houses, the cities, factories, villages, and towns. Authorities from nearly all the States have written to me. I have heard from the universities, congress, senate, and bodies, public and private, of every sort and kind. Deputations.

"It is no nonsense, and no common feeling," wrote Dr. Channing to me yesterday. "It is all heart. There never was, "and never will be, such a triumph." And it is a good thing, is it not, ... to find those fancies it has given me and you the greatest satisfaction to think of, at the core of it all? It makes my heart quieter, and me a more retiring, sober, tranquil man to watch the effect of those thoughts in all this noise and hurry, even than if I sat, pen in hand, to put them down for the first time. Dr. Channing to Dickens.

I feel, in the best aspects of this welcome, something of the presence and influence of that spirit which directs my life, and through a heavy sorrow has pointed upward with unchanging finger for more than four years past. And if I know my heart, not twenty times this praise would move me to an act of folly.' .... Effect upon himself.

There were but two days more before the post left for England, and the close of this part of his letter sketched the engagements that awaited him on leaving Boston. 'We leave here next Saturday. We go to a place called Worcester, about 75 miles off, to Engagements.

Boston: 1842.

'the house of the governor of this place; and stay with him all 'Sunday. On Monday we go on by railroad about 50 miles 'farther to a town called Springfield, where I am met by a '"reception committee" from Hartford 20 miles farther, and 'carried on by the multitude: I am sure I don't know how, but 'I shouldn't wonder if they appear with a triumphal car. On

Public appearances.

'Wednesday I have a public dinner there. On Friday I shall 'be obliged to present myself in public again, at a place called 'Newhaven, about 30 miles further. On Saturday evening I hope 'to be at New York; and there I shall stay ten days or a fort-'night. You will suppose that I have enough to do. I am sitting 'for a portrait and for a bust. I have the correspondence of a

A secretary engaged.

'secretary of state, and the engagements of a fashionable phy-'sician. I have a secretary whom I take on with me. He is a 'young man of the name of Q; was strongly recommended to 'me; is most modest, obliging, silent, and willing; and does his 'work *well*. He boards and lodges at my expense when we 'travel; and his salary is ten dollars per month—about two 'pounds five of our English money. There will be dinners and 'balls at Washington, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and I believe 'everywhere. In Canada, I have promised to *play* at the theatre 'with the officers, for the benefit of a charity. We are already 'weary, at times, past all expression; and I finish this by means 'of a pious fraud. We were engaged to a party, and have written 'to say we are both desperately ill. . . . . "Well," I can fancy 'you saying, "but about his impressions of Boston and the '"Americans?"—Of the latter, I will not say a word until I 'have seen more of them, and have gone into the interior. I will 'only say, now, that we have never yet been required to dine at 'a table d'hôte; that, thus far, our rooms are as much our own 'here, as they would be at the Clarendon; that but for an odd

Phrase

'phrase now and then—such as *Snap of cold weather*; a *tongue-y* '*man* for a talkative fellow; *Possible?* as a solitary interrogation; 'and *Yes?* for indeed—I should have marked, so far, no difference 'whatever between the parties here and those I have left behind. 'The women are very beautiful, but they soon fade; the general 'breeding is neither stiff nor forward; the good nature, universal.

'If you ask the way to a place—of some common waterside man, 'who don't know you from Adam—he turns and goes with you. BOSTON: 1842.
'Universal deference is paid to ladies; and they walk about at General characteristics.
'all seasons, wholly unprotected. . . . This hotel is a trifle smaller 'than Finsbury-square; and is made so infernally hot (I use the 'expression advisedly) by means of a furnace with pipes running 'through the passages, that we can hardly bear it. There are no 'curtains to the beds, or to the bedroom windows. I am told Hotel bedrooms.
'there never are, hardly, all through America. The bedrooms 'are indeed very bare of furniture. Ours is nearly as large as 'your great room, and has a wardrobe in it of painted wood not 'larger (I appeal to K) than an English watch box. I slept in 'this room for two nights, quite satisfied with the belief that it 'was a shower bath.'

The last addition made to this letter, from which many most vivid pages of the *Notes* (among them the bright quaint picture of Boston streets) were taken with small alteration, bore date the 29th of January. 'I hardly know what to add to all this long Personal notices.
'and unconnected history. Dana, the author of that *Two Years* '*before the Mast*,' (a book which I had praised much to him, thinking it like De Foe) 'is a very nice fellow indeed; and in 'appearance not at all the man you would expect. He is short, 'mild-looking, and has a care-worn face. His father is exactly 'like George Cruikshank after a night's jollity—only shorter. 'The professors at the Cambridge university, Longfellow, Felton, 'Jared Sparks, are noble fellows. So is Kenyon's friend, Ticknor. 'Bancroft is a famous man; a straightforward, manly, earnest 'heart; and talks much of you, which is a great comfort. Doctor 'Channing I will tell you more of, after I have breakfasted alone 'with him next Wednesday. . . . Sumner is of great service to me. '. . . The president of the Senate here presides at my dinner on 'Tuesday. Lord Mulgrave lingered with us till last Tuesday (we 'had our little captain to dinner on the Monday), and then went 'on to Canada. Kate is quite well, and so is Anne, whose smart-'ness surpasses belief. They yearn for home, and so do I.

'Of course you will not see in the papers any true account of 'our voyage, for they keep the dangers of the passage, when there Perils of steamers.
'are any, very quiet. I observed so many perils peculiar to

Boston: 1842.

'steamers that I am still undecided whether we shall not return 'by one of the New York liners. On the night of the storm, I 'I was wondering within myself where we should be, if the chimney 'were blown overboard: in which case, it needs no great obser- 'vation to discover that the vessel must be instantly on fire from 'stem to stern. When I went on deck next day, I saw that it 'was held up by a perfect forest of chains and ropes, which had 'been rigged in the night. Hewitt told me (when we were on 'shore, not before) that they had men lashed, hoisted up, and 'swinging there, all through the gale, getting these stays about it. 'This is not agreeable—is it?

A home thought.

'I wonder whether you will remember that next Tuesday is 'my birthday! This letter will leave here that morning.

'On looking back through these sheets, I am astonished to find 'how little I have told you, and how much I have, even now, in 'store which shall be yours by word of mouth. The American 'poor, the American factories, the institutions of all kinds—I 'have a book, already. There is no man in this town, or in this 'State of New England, who has not a blazing fire and a meat 'dinner every day of his life. A flaming sword in the air would 'not attract so much attention as a beggar in the streets. There 'are no charity uniforms, no wearisome repetition of the same 'dull ugly dress, in that blind school.* All are attired after their 'own tastes, and every boy and girl has his or her individuality as 'distinct and unimpaired as you would find it in their own homes. 'At the theatres, all the ladies sit in the fronts of the boxes. The 'gallery are as quiet as the dress circle at dear Drury-lane. A 'man with seven heads would be no sight at all, compared with 'one who couldn't read and write.

'I won't speak (I say "speak"! I wish I could) about the dear 'precious children, because I know how much we shall hear about 'them when we receive those letters from home for which we long 'so ardently.'

How first impressed.

Unmistakeably to be seen, in this earliest of his letters, is the quite fresh and unalloyed impression first received by him at this memorable visit; and it is due, as well to himself as to the

* His descriptions of this school, and of the case of Laura Bridgeman, will be found in the *Notes;* and have, therefore been, of course, omitted here

country which welcomed him, that this should be considered independently of any modification or change it afterwards underwent. Of the fervency and universality of the welcome there could be no doubt, and as little that it sprang from feelings honourable both to giver and receiver. The sources of Dickens's popularity in England were in truth multiplied many-fold in America. The hearty, cordial, and humane side of his genius, had fascinated them quite as much; but there was also something beyond this. The cheerful temper that had given new beauty to the commonest forms of life, the abounding humour which had added largely to all innocent enjoyment, the honourable and in those days rare distinction of America which left no home in the Union inaccessible to such advantages, had made Dickens the object everywhere of grateful admiration, for the most part of personal affection. But even this was not all. I do not say it either to lessen or increase the value of the tribute, but to express simply what it was; and there cannot be a question that the young English author, whom by his language the Americans claimed equally for their own, was almost universally regarded by them as a kind of embodied protest against what was believed to be worst in the institutions of England, depressing and overshadowing in a social sense, and adverse to purely intellectual influences. In all their newspapers of every grade at the time, the feeling of triumph over the mother-country in this particular is predominant. You worship titles, they said, and military heroes, and millionaires, and we of the New World want to show you, by extending the kind of homage that the Old World reserves for kings and conquerors to a young man with nothing to distinguish him but his heart and his genius, what it is we think in these parts worthier of honour than birth or wealth, a title or a sword. Well, there was something in this too, apart from a mere crowing over the mother-country. The Americans had honestly more than a common share in the triumphs of a genius, which in more than one sense had made the deserts and wildernesses of life to blossom like the rose. They were entitled to select for a welcome, as emphatic as they might please to render it, the writer who pre-eminently in his generation had busied himself to 'detect and save,' in human creatures, such sparks of virtue as misery or vice had not availed

BOSTON 1842.

Reasons for the greeting

Why so popular.

What was welcomed.

Boston: 1842.

to extinguish; to discover what is beautiful and comely, under what commonly passes for the ungainly and deformed; to draw happiness and hopefulness from despair itself; and, above all, so to have made known to his own countrymen the wants and sufferings of the poor, the ignorant, and the neglected, that they could be left in absolute neglect no more. 'A triumph has been 'prepared for him,' wrote Mr. Ticknor to our dear friend Kenyon, 'in which the whole country will join. He will have a progress 'through the States unequalled since Lafayette's.' Daniel Webster told the Americans that Dickens had done more already to ameliorate the condition of the English poor than all the statesmen Great Britain had sent into parliament. His sympathies are such, exclaimed Doctor Channing, as to recommend him in an especial manner to us. He seeks out that class, in order to benefit them, with whom American institutions and laws sympathize most strongly; and it is in the passions, sufferings, and virtues of the mass that he has found his subjects of most thrilling interest. 'He shows that life in its rudest form may wear a 'tragic grandeur; that amidst follies and excesses, provoking 'laughter or scorn, the moral feelings do not wholly die; and 'that the haunts of the blackest crime are sometimes lighted up 'by the presence and influence of the noblest souls. His pictures 'have a tendency to awaken sympathy with our race, and to 'change the unfeeling indifference which has prevailed towards 'the depressed multitude, into a sorrowful and indignant sensi-'bility to their wrongs and woes.'

Daniel Webster.

Doctor Channing.

Subsequent disappointments.

Whatever may be the turn which we are to see the welcome take, by dissatisfaction that arose on both sides, it is well that we should thus understand what in its first manifestations was honourable to both. Dickens had his disappointments, and the Americans theirs; but what was really genuine in the first enthusiasm remained without grave alloy from either; and the letters, as I proceed to give them, will so naturally explain and illustrate the mis-understanding as to require little farther comment. I place here on record facsimiles of the invitations to the public entertainments in New York which reached him before he quitted Boston. The mere signatures suffice to show how universal was the welcome from that great city of the Union.

To Charles Dickens Esq.

Liverpool 24th January 1842

Sir.

The undersigned for themselves & in behalf of a wide circle of their fellow citizens, desire to congratulate you on your safe arrival, & tender to you a sincere & hearty welcome

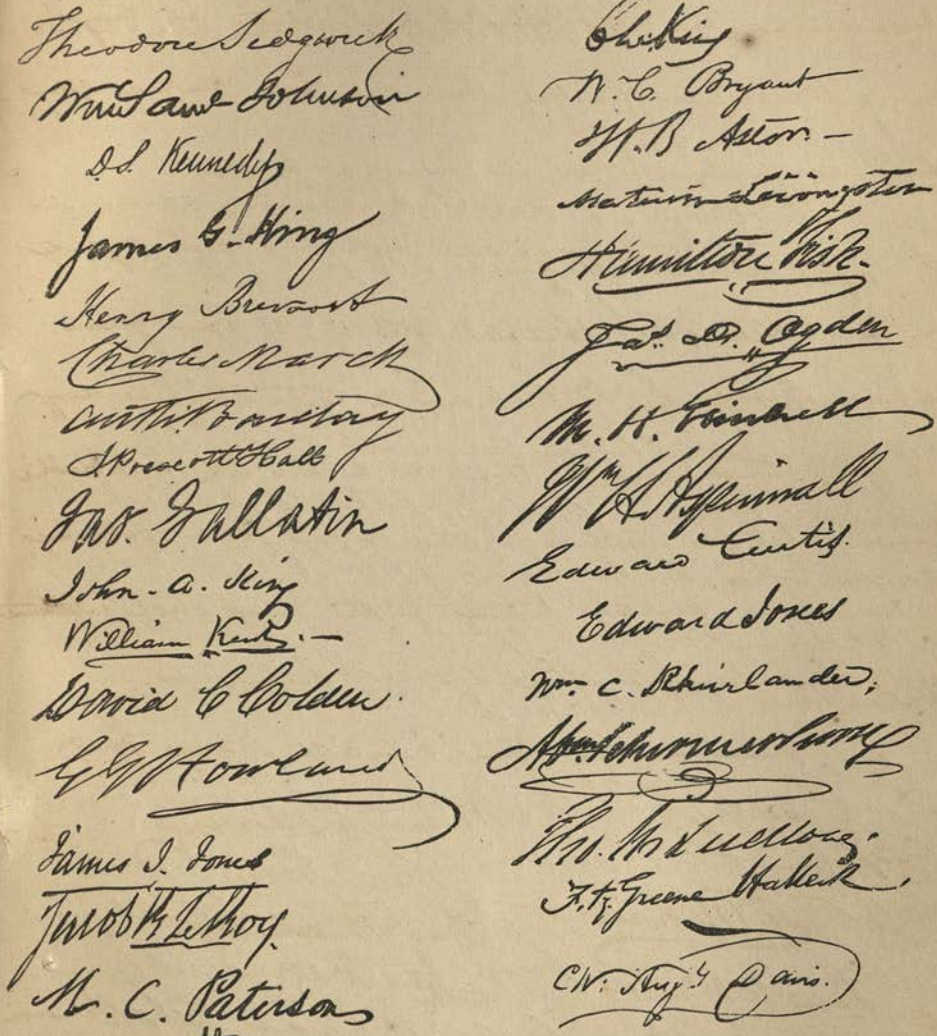
Tho' personally unknown - still we can assure you, that you will find yourself no Stranger among us. — that genius with which you have been so signally gifted - and which your pen has directed with such consummate skill in delineating every passion & sympathy & peculiarity of the human mind - has become to you a passport to all hearts - whilst your happy

Perspicacities, and apt illustrations — pointing at every turn, a practical spiritful moral. — have rendered your name as familiar to us as household words.

In testimony of our respect & high regard and as a slight, tho' thankful, tribute to your genius. we request that you will name as early a day as may suit your convenience, to meet us in this City at a public Dinner — where, as elsewhere, it will be our pride & pleasure to express our gratitude to you for the many such intellectual feast, you have so often spread before us.

We are very truly & cordially your friends

A. Jones
Washington Irving
Philip Hone
W. T. McCoun
Dan'l W. Fullmadge
Sam R. Betts
Jas. S. Jones
Jno Duer.
Murray Hoffman
Henry Cary.



New York January 26. 1842

Sir

The citizens of New York having received the agreeable intelligence of your arrival in the United States, & appreciating the value of your labors in the Cause of Humanity, & the eminently successful exercise of your literary talents, are ambitious to be among the foremost in tendering to you & your Lady the hearty Welcome which they are persuaded is in reserve for you in all parts of our Country. With this object in view we have been appointed a Committee in behalf of a large meeting of Gentlemen convened for the purpose, to request your attendance at a public ball to be given

To Charles Dickens Esq.

in this city.

Mr Coeden one of our number, will have the Honor of presenting this invitation and is charged with the agreeable duty of presenting their Congratulations on your arrival. We shall expect Sir, your kind acceptance of this invitation & your designation of the day when it may suit your convenience to attend.

We are Sir.

With Great respect

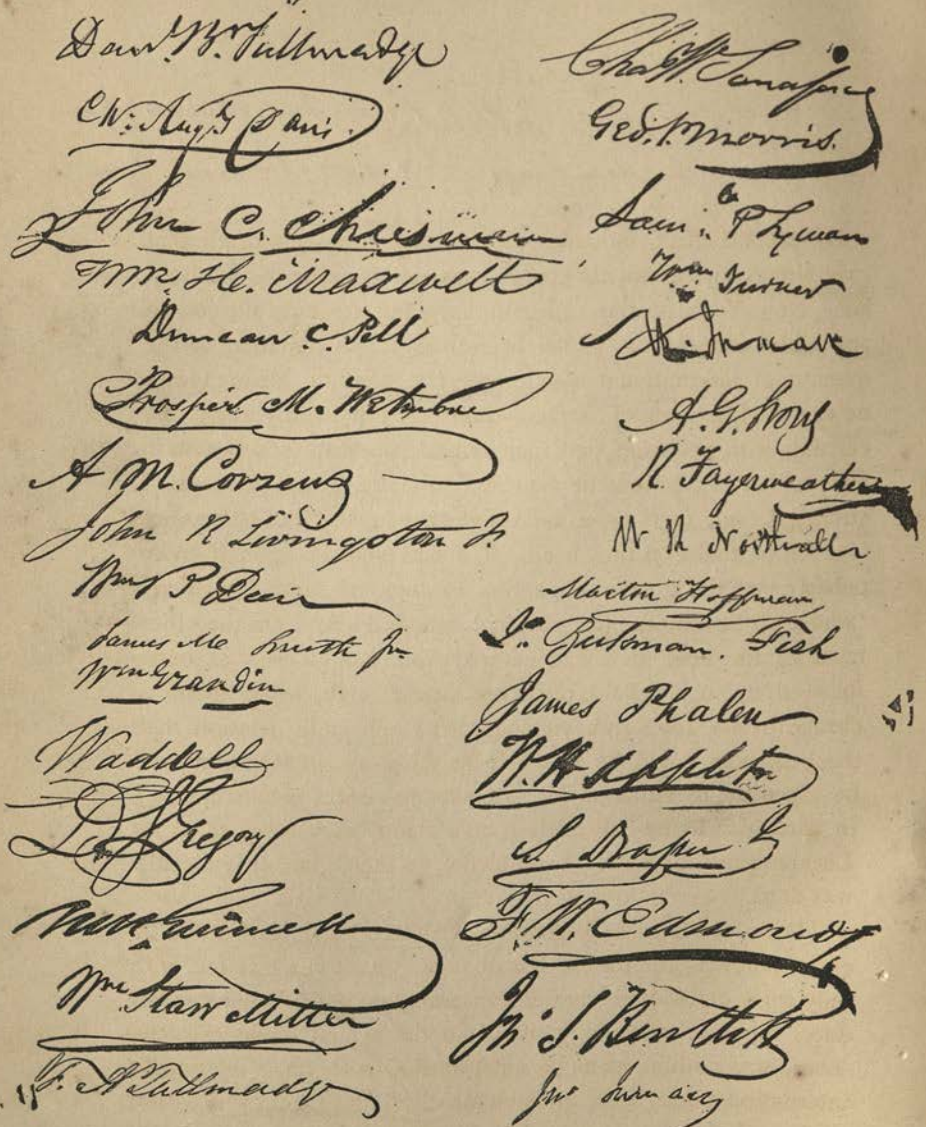
Yr Ob. Servants

P. T. Morris

Philip Stone

John W. Francis.

J. W. Edmonds



III.

SECOND IMPRESSIONS.

1842.

His second letter, radiant with the same kindly warmth that gave always charm to his genius, was dated from the Carlton-hotel, New York, on the 14th February, but its only allusion of any public interest was to the beginning of his agitation of the question of international copyright. He went to America with no express intention of starting this question in any way; and certainly with no belief that such remark upon it as a person in his position could alone be expected to make, would be resented strongly by any sections of the American people. But he was not long left in doubt on this head. He had spoken upon it twice publicly, 'to the great indignation of some of the editors here, 'who are attacking me for so doing, right and left.' On the other hand all the best men had assured him, that, if only at once followed up in England, the blow struck might bring about a change in the law; and, yielding to the agreeable delusion that the best men could be a match for the worst in such a matter, he urged me to enlist on his side what force was obtainable, and in particular, as he had made Scott's claim his war cry, to bring Lockhart into the field. I could not do much, but what I could was done.

New York: 1842. Second letter. International copyright.

Three days later he began another letter; and, as this will be entirely new to the reader, I shall print it as it reached me, with only such omission of matter concerning myself as I think it my duty, however reluctantly, to make throughout these extracts. There was nothing in its personal details, or in those relating to international copyright, available for his *Notes;* from which they were excluded by the two rules he observed in that book, the first to be altogether silent as to the copyright discussion, and the second to abstain from all mention of individuals. But there can

New York: 1842.

be no harm here in violating either rule, for, as Sydney Smith said with his humorous sadness, We are all dead now.

Third letter.

'Carlton-house, New York: Thursday, February Seventeenth '1842. . . . . As there is a sailing-packet from here to England 'to-morrow which is warranted (by the owners) to be a marvellous 'fast sailer, and as it appears most probable that she will reach 'home (I write the word with a pang) before the Cunard steamer 'of next month, I indite this letter. And lest this letter should 'reach you before another letter which I dispatched from here 'last Monday, let me say in the first place that I *did* dispatch a 'brief epistle to you on that day, together with a newspaper, and 'a pamphlet touching the Boz ball; and that I put in the post-'office at Boston another newspaper for you containing an account 'of the dinner, which was just about to come off, you remember, 'when I wrote to you from that city.

The dinner at Boston.

'It was a most superb affair; and the speaking *admirable.* 'Indeed the general talent for public speaking here, is one of the 'most striking of the things that force themselves upon an 'Englishman's notice. As every man looks on to being a member 'of Congress, every man prepares himself for it; and the result is 'quite surprising. You will observe one odd custom—the drinking 'of sentiments. It is quite extinct with us, but here everybody is 'expected to be prepared with an epigram as a matter of course.

At Worcester.

'We left Boston on the fifth, and went away with the governor 'of the city to stay till Monday at his house at Worcester. He 'married a sister of Bancroft's, and another sister of Bancroft's 'went down with us. The village of Worcester is one of the 'prettiest in New England. . . . On Monday morning at nine 'o'clock we started again by railroad and went on to Springfield, 'where a deputation of two were waiting, and everything was in 'readiness that the utmost attention could suggest. Owing to 'the mildness of the weather, the Connecticut river was "open," 'videlicet not frozen, and they had a steamboat ready to carry us 'on to Hartford; thus saving a land-journey of only twenty-five 'miles, but on such roads at this time of year that it takes 'nearly twelve hours to accomplish! The boat was very small, 'the river full of floating blocks of ice, and the depth where we

From Springfield to Hartford.

'went (to avoid the ice and the current) not more than a few 'inches. After two hours and a half of this queer travelling we 'got to Hartford. There, there was quite an English inn; except 'in respect of the bed-rooms, which are always uncomfortable; 'and the best committee of management that has yet presented 'itself. They kept us more quiet, and were more considerate 'and thoughtful, even to their own exclusion, than any I have yet 'had to deal with. Kate's face being horribly bad, I determined 'to give her a rest here; and accordingly wrote to get rid of my 'engagement at Newhaven, on that plea. We remained in this 'town until the eleventh: holding a formal levee every day for 'two hours, and receiving on each from two hundred to three 'hundred people. At five o'clock on the afternoon of the eleventh, 'we set off (still by railroad) for Newhaven, which we reached 'about eight o'clock. The moment we had had tea, we were 'forced to open another levee for the students and professors of 'the college (the largest in the States), and the townspeople. I 'suppose we shook hands, before going to bed, with considerably 'more than five hundred people; and I stood, as a matter of 'course, the whole time . . . .

NEW YORK: 1842.

Queer travelling.

Levees at Hartford and Newhaven.

'Now, the deputation of two had come on with us from Hart-'ford; and at Newhaven there was another committee; and the 'immense fatigue and worry of all this, no words can exaggerate. 'We had been in the morning over jails and deaf and dumb 'asylums; had stopped on the journey at a place called Walling-'ford, where a whole town had turned out to see me, and to 'gratify whose curiosity the train stopped expressly; had had a 'day of great excitement and exertion on the Thursday (this 'being Friday); and were inexpressibly worn out. And when at 'last we got to bed and were "going" to fall asleep, the choristers 'of the college turned out in a body, under the window, and 'serenaded us! We had had, by the bye, another serenade at 'Hartford, from a Mr. Adams (a nephew of John Quincey Adams) 'and a German friend. *They* were most beautiful singers: and 'when they began, in the dead of the night, in a long, musical, 'echoing passage outside our chamber door; singing, in low 'voices to guitars, about home and absent friends and other

At Wallingford.

Serenades.

New York: 1842.

'topics that they knew would interest us; we were more moved 'than I can tell you. In the midst of my sentimentality though, 'a thought occurred to me which made me laugh so immoderately 'that I was obliged to cover my face with the bedclothes. "Good 'Heavens!" I said to Kate, "what a monstrously ridiculous '"and commonplace appearance my boots must have, outside Absurdity of boots. '"the door!" I never *was* so impressed with a sense of the 'absurdity of boots, in all my life.

'The Newhaven serenade was not so good; though there were 'a great many voices, and a "reg'lar" band. It hadn't the heart 'of the other. Before it was six hours old, we were dressing with 'might and main, and making ready for our departure: it being a 'drive of twenty minutes to the steamboat, and the hour of sailing 'nine o'clock. After a hasty breakfast we started off; and after 'another levee on the deck (actually on the deck), and "three '"times three for Dickens," moved towards New York.

Cornelius C. Felton.

'I was delighted to find on board a Mr. Felton whom I had 'known at Boston. He is the Greek professor at Cambridge, and 'was going on to the ball and dinner. Like most men of his class 'whom I have seen, he is a most delightful fellow—unaffected, 'hearty, genial, jolly; quite an Englishman of the best sort. We 'drank all the porter on board, ate all the cold pork and cheese, 'and were very merry indeed. I should have told you, in its 'proper place, that both at Hartford and Newhaven a regular 'bank was subscribed, by these committees, for *all* my expenses. 'No bill was to be got at the bar, and everything was paid for. 'But as I would on no account suffer this to be done, I stoutly 'and positively refused to budge an inch until Mr. Q should have 'received the bills from the landlord's own hands, and paid them 'to the last farthing. Finding it impossible to move me, they 'suffered me, most unwillingly, to carry the point.

The Carlton hotel.

'About half past 2, we arrived here. In half an hour more, we 'reached this hotel, where a very splendid suite of rooms was pre- 'pared for us; and where everything is very comfortable, and no 'doubt (as at Boston) *enormously* dear. Just as we sat down to 'dinner, David Colden made his appearance; and when he had gone, Washington Irving. 'and we were taking our wine, Washington Irving came in alone,

'with open arms. And here he stopped, until ten o'clock at night.' (Through Lord Jeffrey, with whom he was connected by marriage, and Macready, of whom he was the cordial friend, we already knew Mr. Colden; and his subsequent visits to Europe led to many years' intimate and much enjoyed intercourse.) 'Having 'got so far, I shall divide my discourse into four points. First, 'the ball. Secondly, some slight specimens of a certain phase of 'character in the Americans. Thirdly, international copyright. 'Fourthly, my life here, and projects to be carried out while I 'remain.

New York: 1842.

David Colden.

'Firstly, the ball. It came off last Monday (vide pamphlet). '"At a quarter past 9, exactly" (I quote the printed order of 'proceeding), we were waited upon by "David Colden, Esquire, '"and General George Morris;" habited, the former in full ball 'costume, the latter in the full dress uniform of Heaven knows 'what regiment of militia. The general took Kate, Colden gave 'his arm to me, and we proceeded downstairs to a carriage at the 'door, which took us to the stage door of the theatre: greatly to 'the disappointment of an enormous crowd who were besetting 'the main door, and making a most tremendous hullaballoo. The 'scene on our entrance was very striking. There were three 'thousand people present in full dress; from the roof to the floor, 'the theatre was decorated magnificently; and the light, glitter, 'glare, show, noise, and cheering, baffle my descriptive powers. 'We were walked in through the centre of the centre dress-box, 'the front whereof was taken out for the occasion; so to the back 'of the stage, where the mayor and other dignitaries received us; 'and we were then paraded all round the enormous ball-room, 'twice, for the gratification of the many-headed. That done, we 'began to dance—Heaven knows how we did it, for there was no 'room. And we continued dancing until, being no longer able 'even to stand, we slipped away quietly, and came back to the 'hotel. All the documents connected with this extraordinary 'festival (quite unparalleled here) we have preserved; so you 'may suppose that on this head alone we shall have enough to 'show you when we come home. The bill of fare for supper, is, 'in its amount and extent, quite a curiosity.

The ball

Description of it.

New York: 1842.

'Now, the phase of character in the Americans which amuses 'me most, was put before me in its most amusing shape by the
A phase of character. 'circumstances attending this affair. I had noticed it before, and 'have since, but I cannot better illustrate it than by reference to 'this theme. Of course I can do nothing but in some shape or 'other it gets into the newspapers. All manner of lies get there, 'and occasionally a truth so twisted and distorted that it has as 'much resemblance to the real fact as Quilp's leg to Taglioni's.
Newspaper accounts of the ball: 'But with this ball to come off, the newspapers were if possible 'unusually loquacious; and in their accounts of me, and my see-'ings, sayings, and doings on the Saturday night and Sunday before, 'they describe my manner, mode of speaking, dressing, and so 'forth. In doing this, they report that I am a very charming fellow '(of course), and have a very free and easy way with me; '"which," say they, "at first amused a few fashionables;" but 'soon pleased them exceedingly. Another paper, coming after 'the ball, dwells upon its splendour and brilliancy; hugs itself 'and its readers upon all that Dickens saw; and winds up by gravely 'expressing its conviction, that Dickens was never in such society 'in England as he has seen in New York, and that its high and 'striking tone cannot fail to make an indelible impression on his
and of the principal guest. 'mind! For the same reason I am always represented, whenever 'I appear in public, as being "very pale;" "apparently thunder-'"struck;" and utterly confounded by all I see. . . . You recog-'nize the queer vanity which is at the root of all this? I have 'plenty of stories in connection with it to amuse you with when I 'return.'

'*Twenty-fourth February.*

'It is unnecessary to say . . . . that this letter *didn't* come by 'the sailing packet, and *will* come by the Cunard boat. After 'the ball I was laid up with a very bad sore throat, which con-'fined me to the house four whole days; and as I was unable 'to write, or indeed to do anything but doze and drink lemonade, 'I missed the ship. . . I have still a horrible cold, and so has 'Kate, but in other respects we are all right. I proceed to my 'third head: the international copyright question.

Opinion in America 'I believe there is no country, on the face of the earth, where

'there is less freedom of opinion on any subject in reference to which there is a broad difference of opinion, than in this. . . 'There!—I write the words with reluctance, disappointment, and 'sorrow; but I believe it from the bottom of my soul. I spoke, as you know, of international copyright, at Boston; and I spoke 'of it again at Hartford. My friends were paralysed with wonder 'at such audacious daring. The notion that I, a man alone by 'himself, in America, should venture to suggest to the Americans 'that there was one point on which they were neither just to their 'own countrymen nor to us, actually struck the boldest dumb! 'Washington Irving, Prescott, Hoffman, Bryant, Halleck, Dana, 'Washington Allston—every man who writes in this country is 'devoted to the question, and not one of them *dares* to raise his 'voice and complain of the atrocious state of the law. It is 'nothing that of all men living I am the greatest loser by it. It is 'nothing that I have a claim to speak and be heard. The wonder 'is that a breathing man can be found with temerity enough to 'suggest to the Americans the possibility of their having done 'wrong. I wish you could have seen the faces that I saw, down 'both sides of the table at Hartford, when I began to talk about 'Scott. I wish you could have heard how I gave it out. My 'blood so boiled as I thought of the monstrous injustice that I 'felt as if I were twelve feet high when I thrust it down their 'throats.

NEW YORK: 1842.

International copyright.

American authors.

'I had no sooner made that second speech than such an outcry 'began (for the purpose of deterring me from doing the like in 'this city) as an Englishman can form no notion of. Anonymous 'letters; verbal dissuasions; newspaper attacks making Colt (a 'murderer who is attracting great attention here) an angel by 'comparison with me; assertions that I was no gentleman, but a 'mere mercenary scoundrel; coupled with the most monstrous 'mis-representations relative to my design and purpose in visiting 'the United States; came pouring in upon me every day. The 'dinner committee here (composed of the first gentlemen in 'America, remember that) were so dismayed, that they besought 'me not to pursue the subject *although they every one agreed with* '*me*. I answered that I would. That nothing should deter me

Outcry against the guest of the nation.

Asked not to speak on copyright

New York: 1842.

Declines to comply.

'. . . . That the shame was theirs, not mine; and that as I would 'not spare them when I got home, I would not be silenced here. 'Accordingly, when the night came, I asserted my right, with all 'the means I could command to give it dignity, in face, manner, 'or words; and I believe that if you could have seen and heard 'me, you would have loved me better for it than ever you did in 'your life.

'The *New York Herald*, which you will receive with this, is 'the *Satirist* of America; but having a great circulation (on 'account of its commercial intelligence and early news) it can 'afford to secure the best reporters. . . . My speech is done, upon 'the whole, with remarkable accuracy.* There are a great many 'typographical errors in it: and by the omission of one or two 'words, or the substitution of one word for another, it is often 'materially weakened. Thus I did not say that I "claimed" my 'right, but that I "asserted" it; and I did not say that I had '"some claim," but that I had "a most righteous claim," to 'speak. But altogether it is very correct.'

Washington Irving in the chair.

Washington Irving was chairman of this dinner, and having from the first a dread that he should break down in his speech, the catastrophe came accordingly. Near him sat the Cambridge professor who had come with Dickens by boat from Newhaven, with whom already a warm friendship had been formed that lasted for life, and who has pleasantly sketched what happened. Mr. Felton saw Irving constantly in the interval of preparation, and could not but despond at his daily iterated foreboding of *I shall certainly break down*: though, besides the real dread, there was a sly humour which heightened its whimsical horror with an irresistible drollery. But the professor plucked up hope a little when the night came, and he saw that Irving had laid under his plate the manuscript of his speech. During dinner, nevertheless, his old foreboding cry was still heard, and 'at last the moment

* For the effect it had on one of the most distinguished of the American men of letters present at the dinner, see *post*, Book XI. S. 3. 'Personal 'Characteristics.'

'arrived.; Mr. Irving rose; and the deafening and long-continued 'applause by no means lessened his apprehension. He began in 'his pleasant voice; got through two or three sentences pretty 'easily, but in the next hesitated; and, after one or two attempts 'to go on, gave it up, with a graceful allusion to the tournament 'and the troop of knights all armed and eager for the fray; and 'ended with the toast CHARLES DICKENS, THE GUEST OF THE 'NATION. *There!* said he, as he resumed his seat amid applause 'as great as had greeted his rising, *There! I told you I should 'break down, and I've done it!'* He was in London a few months later, on his way to Spain; and I heard Thomas Moore describe at Rogers's table the difficulty there had been to overcome his reluctance, because of this break-down, to go to the dinner of the Literary Fund on the occasion of Prince Albert's presiding. 'However,' said Moore, 'I told him only to attempt 'a few words, and I suggested what they should be, and he said 'he'd never thought of anything so easy, and he went and did 'famously.' I knew very well, as I listened, that this had *not* been the result; but as the distinguished American had found himself, on this second occasion, not among orators as in New York, but among men as unable as himself to speak in public, and equally able to do better things,* he was doubtless more reconciled to his own failure. I have been led to this digression by Dickens's silence on his friend's break-down. He had so great a love for Irving that it was painful to speak of him as at any disadvantage, and of the New York dinner he wrote only in its connection with his own copyright speeches.

NEW YORK: 1842.

Irving's break-down.

22nd of May, 1842.

At a dinner in London same year.

'The effect of all this copyright agitation at least has been to 'awaken a great sensation on both sides of the subject; the

Results of copyright speeches.

* The dinner was on the 10th of May, and early the following morning I had a letter about it from Mr. Blanchard, containing these words: 'Washington Irving couldn't utter a 'word for trembling, and Moore was 'as little as usual. But, poor Tom 'Campbell, great Heavens! what a 'spectacle! Amid roars of laughter 'he began a sentence three times about 'something that Dugald Stewart or 'Lord Bacon had said, and never 'could get beyond those words. The 'Prince was capital, though deucedly 'frightened. He seems unaffected and 'amiable, as well as very clever.

Laman Blanchard

NEW YORK: 1842.

'respectable newspapers and reviews taking up the cudgels as 'strongly in my favour, as the others have done against me. 'Some of the vagabonds take great credit to themselves (grant us 'patience!) for having made me popular by publishing my books 'in newspapers: as if there were no England, no Scotland, no 'Germany, no place but America in the whole world. A splendid 'satire upon this kind of trash has just occurred. A man came

A demand for help.

'here yesterday, and demanded, not besought but demanded, 'pecuniary assistance; and fairly bullied Mr. Q for money. 'When I came home, I dictated a letter to this effect—that such 'applications reached me in vast numbers every day; that if I 'were a man of fortune, I could not render assistance to all who 'sought it; and that, depending on my own exertion for all the 'help I could give, I regretted to say I could afford him none.

A bookseller in distress.

'Upon this, my gentleman sits down and writes me that he is an 'itinerant bookseller; that he is the first man who sold my books 'in New York; that he is distressed in the city where I am 'revelling in luxury; that he thinks it rather strange that the man 'who wrote *Nickleby* should be utterly destitute of feeling; and 'that he would have me "take care I don't repent it." What do 'you think of *that?*—as Mac would say. I thought it such a 'good commentary, that I dispatched the letter to the editor of 'the only English newspaper here, and told him he might print 'it if he liked.

A suggestion.

'I will tell you what *I* should like, my dear friend, always 'supposing that your judgment concurs with mine; and that you 'would take the trouble to get such a document. I should like 'to have a short letter addressed to me, by the principal English 'authors who signed the international copyright petition, expres- 'sive of their sense that I have done my duty to the cause. I 'am sure I deserve it, but I don't wish it on that ground. It is 'because its publication in the best journals here would unques- 'tionably do great good. As the gauntlet is down, let us go on.

Henry Clay's opinion.

'Clay has already sent a gentleman to me express from Wash- 'ington (where I shall be on the 6th or 7th of next month) to 'declare his strong interest in the matter, his cordial approval of 'the "manly" course I have held in reference to it, and his

'desire to stir in it if possible. I have lighted up such a blaze 'that a meeting of the foremost people on the other side (very 'respectfully and properly conducted in reference to me, per- 'sonally, I am bound to say) was held in this town 'tother night. 'And it would be a thousand pities if we did not strike as hard as 'we can, now that the iron is so hot. NEW YORK 1842.

'I have come at last, and it is time I did, to my life here, and 'intentions for the future. I can do nothing that I want to do, 'go nowhere where I want to go, and see nothing that I want to 'see. If I turn into the street, I am followed by a multitude. If 'I stay at home, the house becomes, with callers, like a fair. If 'I visit a public institution, with only one friend, the directors 'come down incontinently, waylay me in the yard, and address 'me in a long speech. I go to a party in the evening, and am so 'inclosed and hemmed about by people, stand where I will, that 'I am exhausted for want of air. I dine out, and have to talk 'about everything, to everybody. I go to church for quiet, and 'there is a violent rush to the neighbourhood of the pew I sit in, 'and the clergyman preaches *at* me. I take my seat in a rail- 'road car, and the very conductor won't leave me alone. I get 'out at a station, and can't drink a glass of water, without having 'a hundred people looking down my throat when I open my 'mouth to swallow. Conceive what all this is! Then by every 'post, letters on letters arrive, all about nothing, and all demand- 'ing an immediate answer. This man is offended because I won't 'live in his house; and that man is thoroughly disgusted because 'I won't go out more than four times in one evening. I have no 'rest or peace, and are in a perpetual worry. Life in New York. Distresses of popularity.

'Under these febrile circumstances, which this climate especially 'favours, I have come to the resolution that I will not (so far as 'my will has anything to do with the matter) accept any more 'public entertainments or public recognitions of any kind, during 'my stay in the United States; and in pursuance of this deter- 'mination I have refused invitations from Philadelphia, Balti- 'more, Washington, Virginia, Albany, and Providence. Heaven 'knows whether this will be effectual, but I shall soon see, for on 'Monday morning the 28th we leave for Philadelphia. There, I Intentions for the future.

New York: 1842.

'shall only stay three days. Thence we go to Baltimore, and 'there I shall only stay three days. Thence to Washington, where 'we may stay perhaps ten days; perhaps not so long. Thence 'to Virginia, where we may halt for one day; and thence to 'Charleston, where we may pass a week perhaps; and where we 'shall very likely remain until your March letters reach us, through 'David Colden. I had a design of going from Charleston to 'Columbia in South Carolina, and there engaging a carriage, a 'baggage-tender and negro boy to guard the same, and a saddle-'horse for myself—with which caravan I intended going "right '"away," as they say here, into the west, through the wilds of 'Kentucky and Tennessee, across the Alleghany-mountains, and 'so on until we should strike the lakes and could get to Canada. 'But it has been represented to me that this is a track only known 'to travelling merchants; that the roads are bad, the country a 'tremendous waste, the inns log-houses, and the journey one that 'would play the very devil with Kate. I am staggered, but not 'deterred. If I find it possible to be done in the time, I mean 'to do it; being quite satisfied that without some such dash, I can 'never be a free agent, or see anything worth the telling.

Going south: and west.

'We mean to return home in a packet-ship—not a steamer. 'Her name is the George Washington, and she will sail from here, 'for Liverpool, on the seventh of June. At that season of the 'year, they are seldom more than three weeks making the voyage; 'and I never will trust myself upon the wide ocean, if it please 'Heaven, in a steamer again. When I tell you all that I observed 'on board that Britannia, I shall astonish you. Meanwhile, con-'sider two of their dangers. First, that if the funnel were blown 'overboard, the vessel must instantly be on fire, from stem to 'stern: to comprehend which consequence, you have only to 'understand that the funnel is more than 40 feet high, and that at 'night you see the solid fire two or three feet above its top. 'Imagine this swept down by a strong wind, and picture to your-'self the amount of flame on deck; and that a strong wind is 'likely to sweep it down you soon learn, from the precautions 'taken to keep it up in a storm, when it is the first thing thought 'of. Secondly, each of these boats consumes between London

As to return.

Dangers incident to steamers.

'and Halifax 700 tons of coals; and it is pretty clear, from this 'enormous difference of weight in a ship of only 1200 tons 'burden in all, that she must either be too heavy when she comes 'out of port, or too light when she goes in. The daily difference 'in her rolling, as she burns the coals out, is something absolutely 'fearful. Add to all this, that by day and night she is full of fire 'and people, that she has no boats, and that the struggling of 'that enormous machinery in a heavy sea seems as though it 'would rend her into fragments—and you may have a pretty 'considerable damned good sort of a feeble notion that it don't 'fit nohow; and that it a'nt calculated to make you smart, over-'much; and that you don't feel 'special bright; and by no means 'first rate; and not at all tonguey (or disposed for conversation); 'and that however rowdy you may be by natur', it does use you 'up com-plete, and that's a fact; and makes you quake consider-'able, and disposed toe damn the ĕngine!—All of which phrases, 'I beg to add, are pure Americanisms of the first water.

NEW YORK: 1842.

Pure Americanisms.

'When we reach Baltimore, we are in the regions of slavery. 'It exists there, in its least shocking and most mitigated form; 'but there it is. They whisper, here (they dare only whisper, 'you know, and that below their breaths), that on that place, and 'all through the South, there is a dull gloomy cloud on which the 'very word seems written. I shall be able to say, one of these 'days, that I accepted no public mark of respect in any place 'where slavery was;—and that's something.

Slavery.

'The ladies of America are decidedly and unquestionably 'beautiful. Their complexions are not so good as those of 'Englishwomen; their beauty does not last so long; and their 'figures are very inferior. But they are most beautiful. I still 'reserve my opinion of the national character—just whispering 'that I tremble for a radical coming here, unless he is a radical 'on principle, by reason and reflection, and from the sense of 'right. I fear that if he were anything else, he would return 'home a tory . . . . . I say no more on that head for two months 'from this time, save that I do fear that the heaviest blow ever 'dealt at liberty will be dealt by this country, in the failure of its 'example to the earth. The scenes that are passing in Congress

Ladies of America.

New York: 1842.

Party conflicts.

'now, all tending to the separation of the States, fill one with such 'a deep disgust that I dislike the very name of Washington '(meaning the place, not the man), and am repelled by the mere 'thought of approaching it.

'*Twenty-seventh February. Sunday.*

A Cunard steamer missing.

'There begins to be great consternation here, in reference to 'the Cunard packet which (we suppose) left Liverpool on the 'fourth. She has not yet arrived. We scarcely know what to do 'with ourselves in our extreme anxiety to get letters from home. 'I have really had serious thoughts of going back to Boston, 'alone, to be nearer news. We have determined to remain here 'until Tuesday afternoon, if she should not arrive before, and to 'send Mr. Q and the luggage on to Philadelphia to-morrow

Misgivings.

'morning. God grant she may not have gone down: but every 'ship that comes in brings intelligence of a terrible gale (which 'indeed was felt ashore here) on the night of the fourteenth; 'and the sea-captains swear (not without some prejudice of 'course) that no steamer could have lived through it, supposing 'her to have been in its full fury. As there is no steam packet to 'go to England, supposing the Caledonia not to arrive, we are 'obliged to send our letters by the Garrick ship, which sails early 'to-morrow morning. Consequently I must huddle this up, and 'dispatch it to the post-office with all speed. I have so much to 'say that I could fill quires of paper, which renders this sudden 'pull-up the more provoking.

Petition for Congress.

'I have in my portmanteau a petition for an international copy-'right law, signed by all the best American writers with Washington 'Irving at their head. They have requested me to hand it to 'Clay for presentation, and to back it with any remarks I may 'think proper to offer. So "Hoo-roar for the principle, as the '"money-lender said, ven he vouldn't renoo the bill."

'God bless you. . . . . You know what I would say about 'home and the darlings. A hundred times God bless you . . . . . 'Fears are entertained for Lord Ashburton also. Nothing has 'been heard of him.'

A brief letter, sent me next day by the minister's bag, was in

effect a postscript to the foregoing; and expressed still more strongly the apprehensions his voyage out had impressed him with, and which, though he afterwards saw reason greatly to modify them, were not so strange at that time as they appear to us now. NEW YORK: 1842.

'Carlton-house, New York, February twenty-eighth, 1842 . . .

'The Caledonia, I grieve and regret to say, has not arrived. If 'she left England to her time, she has been four and twenty days 'at sea. There is no news of her; and on the nights of the 'fourteenth and eighteenth it blew a terrible gale, which almost 'justifies the worst suspicions. For myself, I have hardly any 'hope of her; having seen enough, in our passage out, to con- 'vince me that steaming across the ocean in heavy weather is as 'yet an experiment of the utmost hazard. No hope of the Caledonia.

'As it was supposed that there would be no steamer whatever 'for England this month (since in ordinary course the Caledonia 'would have returned with the mails on the 2nd of March), I 'hastily got the letters ready yesterday and sent them by the 'Garrick; which may perhaps be three weeks out, but is not 'very likely to be longer. But belonging to the Cunard company 'is a boat called the Unicorn, which in the summer time plies up 'the St. Lawrence, and brings passengers from Canada to join 'the British and North American steamers at Halifax. In the 'winter she lies at the last-mentioned place; from which news 'has come this morning that they have sent her on to Boston for 'the mails; and, rather than interrupt the communication, mean 'to dispatch her to England in lieu of the poor Caledonia. This 'in itself, by the way, is a daring deed; for she was originally 'built to run between Liverpool and Glasgow, and is no more 'designed for the Atlantic than a Calais packet-boat; though she 'once crossed it, in the summer season. Substitute for the Caledonia.

'You may judge, therefore, what the owners think of the pro- 'bability of the Caledonia's arrival. How slight an alteration in 'our plans would have made us passengers on board of her!

'It would be difficult to tell you, my dear fellow, what an im- 'pression this has made upon our minds, or with what intense 'anxiety and suspense we have been waiting for your letters from

New York: 1842.

'home. We were to have gone South to-day, but linger here 'until to-morrow afternoon (having sent the secretary and luggage 'forward) for one more chance of news. Love to dear Macready, 'and to dear Mac, and every one we care for. It's useless to 'speak of the dear children. It seems now as though we should 'never hear of them. . . . .

Of distinguished Americans.

'P.S. Washington Irving is *a great* fellow. We have laughed 'most heartily together. He is just the man he ought to be. So 'is Doctor Channing, with whom I have had an interesting cor- 'respondence since I saw him last at Boston. Halleck is a merry 'little man. Bryant a sad one, and very reserved. Washington 'Allstoñ the painter (who wrote *Monaldi*) is a fine specimen of a 'glorious old genius. Longfellow, whose volume of poems I 'have got for you, is a frank accomplished man as well as a fine 'writer, and will be in town "next fall." Tell Macready that 'I suspect prices here must have rather altered since his time. 'I paid our fortnight's bill here, last night. We have dined 'out every day (except when I was laid up with a sore throat), 'and only had in all four bottles of wine. The bill was 70*l.* 'English ! ! !

'You will see, by my other letter, how we have been fêted and 'feasted; and how there is war to the knife about the inter- 'national copyright; and how I *will* speak about it, and decline 'to be put down . . . .

Thoughts of the children.

'Oh for news from home! I think of your letters so full of 'heart and friendship, with perhaps a little scrawl of Charley's 'or Mamey's, lying at the bottom of the deep sea; and am as 'full of sorrow as if they had once been living creatures.—Well! 'they *may* come, yet.'

Disaster to the Caledonia.

They did reach him, but not by the Caledonia. His fears as to that vessel were but too well founded. On the very day when she was due in Boston (the 18th of February) it was learnt in London that she had undergone misadventure; that, her decks having been swept and her rudder torn away, though happily no lives were lost, she had returned disabled to Cork; and that the

Acadia, having received her passengers and mails, was to sail with them from Liverpool next day. NEW YORK 1842.

Acadia takes her place.

Of the main subject of that letter written on the day preceding; of the quite unpremeditated impulse, out of which sprang his advocacy of claims which he felt to be represented in his person; of the injustice done by his entertainers to their guest in ascribing such advocacy to selfishness; and of the graver wrong done by them to their own highest interests, nay, even to their commonest and most vulgar interests, in continuing to reject those claims; I will add nothing now to what all those years ago I laboured very hard to lay before many readers. It will be enough if I here print, from the authors' letters I sent out to him by the next following mail in compliance with his wish, this which follows from a very dear friend of his and mine. I fortunately had it transcribed before I posted it to him; Mr. Carlyle having in some haste written from 'Templand, 26 March, 1842,' and taken no copy. International copyright.

Letter to Dickens from Carlyle.

'We learn by the newspapers that you everywhere in America 'stir up the question of international copyright, and thereby 'awaken huge dissonance where all else were triumphant unison 'for you. I am asked my opinion of the matter, and requested 'to write it down in words.

'Several years ago, if memory err not, I was one of many 'English writers, who, under the auspices of Miss Martineau, did 'already sign a petition to congress praying for an international 'copyright between the two Nations,—which properly are not 'two Nations, but one; *indivisible* by parliament, congress, or 'any kind of human law or diplomacy, being already *united* by 'Heaven's Act of Parliament, and the everlasting law of Nature 'and Fact. To that opinion I still adhere, and am like to con- 'tinue adhering.

On copyright.

'In discussion of the matter before any congress or parliament, 'manifold considerations and argumentations will necessarily 'arise; which to me are not interesting, nor essential for helping 'me to a decision. They respect the time and manner in which 'the thing should be; not at all whether the thing should be or 'not. In an ancient book, reverenced I should hope on both

New York: 1842.

'sides of the Ocean, it was thousands of years ago written down 'in the most decisive and explicit manner, "Thou *shalt not* steal."

Argument against stealing.

'That thou belongest to a different "Nation," and canst steal 'without being certainly hanged for it, gives thee no permission 'to steal! Thou shalt *not* in anywise steal at all! So it is written 'down, for Nations and for Men, in the Law-Book of the Maker 'of this Universe. Nay, poor Jeremy Bentham and others step 'in here, and will demonstrate that it is actually our true con- 'venience and expediency not to steal; which I for my share, 'on the great scale and on the small, and in all conceivable 'scales and shapes, do also firmly believe it to be. For example,

Advantages of honesty.

'if Nations abstained from stealing, what need were there of 'fighting,—with its butcherings and burnings, decidedly the most 'expensive thing in this world? How much more two Nations, 'which, as I said, are but one Nation; knit in a thousand ways 'by Nature and Practical Intercourse; indivisible brother elements 'of the same great Saxondom, to which in all honorable ways be 'long life!

'When Mr. Robert Roy M'Gregor lived in the district of 'Menteith on the Highland border two centuries ago, he for his 'part found it more convenient to supply himself with beef by 'stealing it alive from the adjacent glens, than by buying it killed

Rob Roy's plan not the best.

'in the Stirling butchers'-market. It was Mr. Roy's plan of sup- 'plying himself with beef in those days, this of stealing it. In 'many a little "Congress" in the district of Menteith, there was 'debating, doubt it not, and much specious argumentation this 'way and that, before they could ascertain that, really and truly, 'buying was the best way to get your beef; which however in 'the long run they did with one assent find it indisputably to be: 'and accordingly they hold by it to this day.'

Dickens and Carlyle.

This brave letter was an important service rendered at a critical time, and Dickens was very grateful for it. But, as time went on, he had other and higher causes for gratitude to its writer. Admiration of Carlyle increased with his years; and there was no one whom in later life he honoured so much, or had a more profound regard for.

IV.

PHILADELPHIA AND THE SOUTH.

1842.

DICKENS'S next letter was begun in the 'United-states-hotel, 'Philadelphia,' and bore date 'Sunday, sixth March, 1842.' It treated of much dealt with afterwards at greater length in the *Notes*, but the freshness and vivacity of the first impressions in it have surprised me. I do not however print any passage here which has not its own interest independently of anything contained in that book. The rule will be continued, as in the portions of letters already given, of not transcribing anything before printed, or anything having even but a near resemblance to descriptions that appear in the *Notes*. PHILADELPHIA: 1842.

'. . . . . As this is likely to be the only quiet day 'I shall have for a long time, I devote it to writing to you. We 'have heard nothing from you * yet, and only have for our con- 'solation the reflection that the Columbia is now on her way out. 'No news had been heard of the Caledonia yesterday afternoon, 'when we left New York. We *were* to have quitted that place 'last Tuesday, but have been detained there all the week by 'Kate having so bad a sore throat that she was obliged to keep 'her bed. We left yesterday afternoon at five o'clock, and arrived 'here at eleven last night. Let me say, by the way, that this is 'a very trying climate. Ship next after Caledonia.

'I have often asked Americans in London which were the 'better railroads—ours or theirs? They have taken time for 'reflection, and generally replied on mature consideration that 'they rather thought we excelled; in respect of the punctu- 'ality with which we arrived at our stations, and the smoothness 'of our travelling. I wish you could see what an American rail- 'road is, in some parts where I now have seen them. I won't What he was told as to railroads.

* At the top of the sheet, above the address and date, are the words 'Read 'on. We *have* your precious letters, 'but you'll think, at first, we have 'not. C. D.'

Philadelphia: 1842.

'say I wish you could feel what it is, because that would be an 'unchristian and savage aspiration. It is never inclosed, or 'warded off. You walk down the main street of a large town: 'and, slap-dash, headlong, pell-mell, down the middle of the 'street; with pigs burrowing, and boys flying kites and playing 'marbles, and men smoking, and women talking, and children 'crawling, close to the very rails; there comes tearing along a

Practical experience.

'mad locomotive with its train of cars, scattering a red-hot shower 'of sparks (from its *wood* fire) in all directions; screeching, hiss- 'ing, yelling, and panting; and nobody one atom more concerned 'than if it were a hundred miles away. You cross a turnpike- 'road; and there is no gate, no policeman, no signal—nothing 'to keep the wayfarer or quiet traveller out of the way, but a 'wooden arch on which is written in great letters "Look out for '"the locomotive." And if any man, woman, or child, don't 'look out, why it's his or her fault, and there's an end of it.

'The cars are like very shabby omnibuses—only larger; hold- 'ing sixty or seventy people. The seats, instead of being placed

Railway cars.

'long ways, are put cross-wise, back to front. Each holds two. 'There is a long row of these on each side of the caravan, and 'a narrow passage up the centre. The windows are usually all 'closed, and there is very often, in addition, a hot, close, most 'intolerable charcoal stove in a red-hot glow. The heat and 'closeness are quite insupportable. But this is the characteristic 'of all American houses, of all the public institutions, chapels, 'theatres, and prisons. From the constant use of the hard 'anthracite coal in these beastly furnaces, a perfectly new class 'of diseases is springing up in the country. Their effect upon 'an Englishman is briefly told. He is always very sick and 'very faint; and has an intolerable headache, morning, noon, 'and night.

Ladies' cars.

'In the ladies' car, there is no smoking of tobacco allowed. 'All gentlemen who have ladies with them, sit in this car; and 'it is usually very full. Before it, is the gentlemen's car; which 'is something narrower. As I had a window close to me yester- 'day which commanded this gentlemen's car, I looked at it pretty 'often, perforce. The flashes of saliva flew so perpetually and

'incessantly out of the windows all the way, that it looked as 'though they were ripping open feather-beds inside, and letting 'the wind dispose of the feathers. But this spitting is universal. 'In the courts of law, the judge has his spittoon on the bench, 'the counsel have theirs, the witness has his, the prisoner his, 'and the crier his. The jury are accommodated at the rate of 'three men to a spittoon (or spit-box as they call it here); and 'the spectators in the gallery are provided for, as so many men 'who in the course of nature expectorate without cessation. There 'are spit-boxes in every steamboat, bar-room, public dining-room, 'house of office, and place of general resort, no matter what it 'be. In the hospitals, the students are requested, by placard, to 'use the boxes provided for them, and not to spit upon the stairs. 'I have twice seen gentlemen, at evening parties in New York, 'turn aside when they were not engaged in conversation, and 'spit upon the drawing-room carpet. And in every bar-room 'and hotel passage the stone floor looks as if it were paved with 'open oysters—from the quantity of this kind of deposit which 'tesselates it all over . . .

PHILADELPHIA: 1842.

See *Notes*, 57.

Spittoons.

'The institutions at Boston, and at Hartford, are most admira- 'ble. It would be very difficult indeed to improve upon them. 'But this is not so at New York; where there is an ill-managed 'lunatic asylum, a bad jail, a dismal workhouse, and a perfectly 'intolerable place of police-imprisonment. A man is found drunk 'in the streets, and is thrown into a cell below the surface of the 'earth; profoundly dark; so full of noisome vapours that when you 'enter it with a candle you see a ring about the light, like that 'which surrounds the moon in wet and cloudy weather; and 'so offensive and disgusting in its filthy odours, that you '*cannot bear* its stench. He is shut up within an iron door, in a 'series of vaulted passages where no one stays; has no drop of 'water, or ray of light, or visitor, or help of any kind; and there 'he remains until the magistrate's arrival. If he die (as one man 'did not long ago) he is half eaten by the rats in an hour's time '(as this man was). I expressed, on seeing these places the 'other night, the disgust I felt, and which it would be impossible 'to repress. "Well; I don't know," said the night constable—

Contrasts in Massachusetts and New York.

Police-cells in New York.

Philadelphia: 1842.

'that's a national answer by the bye—"Well; I don't know.
'" I've had six and twenty young women locked up here together,
'And that's a fact!' '" and beautiful ones too, and that's a fact." The cell was certainly
'no larger than the wine-cellar in Devonshire-terrace; at least
'three feet lower; and stunk like a common sewer. There was
'one woman in it, then. The magistrate begins his examinations
'at five o'clock in the morning; the watch is set at seven at
'night; if the prisoners have been given in charge by an officer,
'they are not taken out before nine or ten; and in the interval
'they remain in these places, where they could no more be heard to
'cry for help, in case of a fit or swoon among them, than a man's
'voice could be heard after he was coffined up in his grave.

'There is a prison in this same city, and indeed in the same
'building, where prisoners for grave offences await their trial, and
House of detention in New York. 'to which they are sent back when under remand. It sometimes
'happens that a man or woman will remain here for twelve
'months, waiting the result of motions for new trial, and in arrest
'of judgment, and what not. I went into it the other day:
'without any notice or preparation, otherwise I find it difficult to
'catch them in their work-a-day aspect. I stood in a long, high,
'narrow building, consisting of four galleries one above the other,
'with a bridge across each, on which sat a turnkey, sleeping or
'reading as the case might be. From the roof, a couple of wind-
'sails dangled and drooped, limp and useless; the skylight being
'fast closed, and they only designed for summer use. In the
'centre of the building was the eternal stove; and along both
'sides of every gallery was a long row of iron doors—looking like
'furnace doors, being very small, but black and cold as if the
'fires within had gone out.

'A man with keys appears, to show us round. A good-looking
'fellow, and, in his way, civil and obliging.' (I omit a dialogue
Notes, 49. of which the substance has been printed, and give only that which appears for the first time here.)

'" Suppose a man's here for twelve months. Do you mean to
'" say he never comes out at that little iron door."

'" He *may* walk some, perhaps—not much."

'" Will you show me a few of them?"

'"Ah! All, if you like."

PHILADELPHIA: 1842.

'He threw open a door, and I looked in. An old man was 'sitting on his bed, reading. The light came in through a small 'chink, very high up in the wall. Across the room ran a thick 'iron pipe to carry off filth; this was bored for the reception of 'something like a big funnel in shape; and over the funnel was a 'watercock. This was his washing apparatus and water-closet. 'It was not savoury, but not very offensive. He looked up at 'me; gave himself an odd, dogged kind of shake; and fixed his 'eyes on his book again. I came out, and the door was shut 'and locked. He had been there a month, and would have to 'wait another month for his trial. "Has he ever walked out '"now, for instance?" "No." . . .

A prisoner.

'"In England, if a man is under sentence of death even, he '"has a yard to walk in at certain times."

'"Possible?"

'. . . Making me this answer with a coolness which is perfectly 'untranslateable and inexpressible, and which is quite peculiar 'to the soil, he took me to the women's side; telling me, upon 'the way, all about this man, who, it seems, murdered his wife, 'and will certainly be hanged. The women's doors have a small 'square aperture in them; I looked through one, and saw a 'pretty boy about ten or twelve years old, who seemed lonely and 'miserable enough—as well he might. "What's *he* been doing?" 'says I. "Nothing," says my friend. "Nothing!". says I. '"No," says he. "He's here for safe keeping. He saw his '"father kill his mother, and is detained to give evidence against '"him—that was his father, you saw just now." "But that's '"rather hard treatment for a witness, isn't it?"—"Well! I don't '"know. It a'nt a very rowdy life, and *that's* a fact." So my 'friend, who was an excellent fellow in his way, and very obliging, 'and a handsome young man to boot, took me off to show me 'some more curiosities; and I was very much obliged to him, 'for the place was so hot, and I so giddy, that I could scarcely 'stand. . . .

Women's side.

Boy inmate.

'When a man is hanged in New York, he is walked out of one 'of these cells, without any condemned sermon or other religious

Philadelphia: 1842.

'formalities, straight into the narrow jail-yard, which may
'about the width of Cranbourn-alley. There, a gibbet is erecte
'which is of curious construction; for the culprit stands on t
'earth with the rope about his neck, which passes through
'pulley in the top of the "Tree" (see *Newgate Calendar* passin
'and is attached to a weight something heavier than the ma
'This weight being suddenly let go, drags the rope down with
'and sends the criminal flying up fourteen feet into the air; wh
'the judge, and jury, and five and twenty citizens (whose presence
'is required by the law), stand by, that they may afterwards

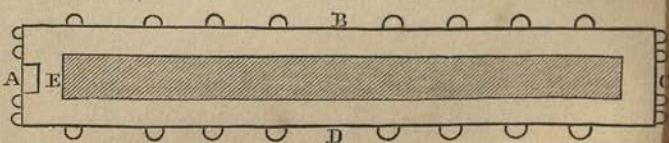
Capital punishment in New York:

'certify to the fact. This yard is a very dismal place; and when
'I looked at it, I thought the practice infinitely superior to ours:
'much more solemn, and far less degrading and indecent.

better administered than ours then.

'There is another prison near New York which is a house of
'correction. The convicts labour in stone-quarries near at hand,
'but the jail has no covered yards or shops, so that when t
'weather is wet (as it was when I was there) each man is shut
'in his own little cell, all the live-long day. These cells, in a
'the correction-houses I have seen, are on one uniform plan—
'thus:

A prison with four hundred single cells.



'A, B, C, and D, are the walls of the building with windows in
'them, high up in the wall. The shaded place in the centre
'represents four tiers of cells, one above the other, with doors of
'grated iron, and a light grated gallery to each tier. Four tiers
'front to E, and four to D, so that by this means you may be said,
'in walking round, to see eight tiers in all. The intermediate
'blank space you walk in, looking up at these galleries; so that,
'coming in at the door E, and going either to the right or left till
'you come back to the door again, you see all the cells under
'one roof and in one high room. Imagine them in number 400,
'and in every one a man locked up; this one with his hands

'through the bars of his grate, this one in bed (in the middle of 'the day, remember), and this one flung down in a heap upon the 'ground with his head against the bars like a wild beast. Make 'the rain pour down in torrents outside. Put the everlasting 'stove in the midst; hot, suffocating, and vaporous, as a witch's 'cauldron. Add a smell like that of a thousand old mildewed 'umbrellas wet through, and a thousand dirty clothes-bags musty, 'moist, and fusty, and you will have some idea—a very feeble 'one, my dear friend, on my word—of this place yesterday week. 'You know of course that we adopted our improvements in 'prison-discipline from the American pattern; but I am confident 'that the writers who have the most lustily lauded the American 'prisons, have never seen Chesterton's domain or Tracey's. 'There is no more comparison between those two prisons of ours, 'and any I have seen here YET, than there is between the keepers 'here, and those two gentlemen. Putting out of sight the 'difficulty we have in England of finding *useful* labour for the 'prisoners (which of course arises from our being an older 'country, and having vast numbers of artizans unemployed), our 'system is more complete, more impressive, and more satisfactory 'in every respect. It is very possible that I have not come to 'the best, not having yet seen Mount Auburn. I will tell you 'when I have. And also when I have come to those inns, men- 'tioned—vaguely rather—by Miss Martineau, where they under- 'charge literary people for the love the landlords bear them. My 'experience, so far, has been of establishments where (perhaps for 'the same reason) they very monstrously and violently overcharge 'a man whose position forbids remonstrance.

PHILADELPHIA: 1842.

Comparison with English prisons.

Inns and landlords.

'WASHINGTON, Sunday, March the Thirteenth, 1842.

'In allusion to the last sentence, my dear friend, I must tell 'you a slight experience I had in Philadelphia. My rooms had 'been ordered for a week, but, in consequence of Kate's illness, 'only Mr. Q and the luggage had gone on. Mr. Q always lives 'at the table d'hôte, so that while we were in New York our 'rooms were empty. The landlord not only charged me half the 'full rent for the time during which the rooms were reserved for

WASHINGTON: 1842.

Washington: 1842.

'us (which was quite right), but charged me also *for board f*
'*myself and Kate and Anne, at the rate of nine dollars per day f*

Hotel extortion.

'the same period, when we were actually living, at the sa
'expense, in New York ! ! ! I *did* remonstrate upon this hea
'but was coolly told it was the custom (which I have since be
'assured is a lie), and had nothing for it but to pay the amou
'What else could I do? I was going away by the steamboat
'five o'clock in the morning; and the landlord knew perfec
'well that my disputing an item of his bill would draw down upon
'me the sacred wrath of the newspapers, which would one and all
'demand in capitals if THIS was the gratitude of the man whom
'America had received as she had never received any other man
'but La Fayette?

Philadelphia Penitentiary.

'I went last Tuesday to the Eastern Penitentiary near Phila-
'delphia, which is the only prison in the States, or I believe in
'the world, on the principle of hopeless, strict, and unrelaxed
'solitary confinement, during the whole term of the sentence.
'is wonderfully kept, but a most dreadful, fearful place. T
'inspectors, immediately on my arrival in Philadelphia, invi
'me to pass the day in the jail, and to dine with them when I
'finished my inspection, that they might hear my opinion of

Solitary system.

'system. Accordingly I passed the whole day in going from
'to cell, and conversing with the prisoners. Every facility
'given me, and no constraint whatever imposed upon any m
'free speech. If I were to write you a letter of twenty sheet
'could not tell you this one day's work; so I will reserve it
'that happy time when we shall sit round the table at Jack
'Straw's—you, and I, and Mac—and go over my diary. I never
'shall be able to dismiss from my mind the impressions of that
'day. Making notes of them, as I have done, is an absurdity,
'for they are written, beyond all power of erasure, in my brain.

The prisoners.

'I saw men who had been there, five years, six years, eleven
'years, two years, two months, two days; some whose term was
'nearly over, and some whose term had only just begun. Women
'too, under the same variety of circumstances. Every prisoner
'who comes into the jail, comes at night; is put into a bath, and
'dressed in the prison garb; and then a black hood is drawn

'over his face and head, and he is led to the cell from which 'he never stirs again until his whole period of confinement has 'expired. I looked at some of them with the same awe as I 'should have looked at men who had been buried alive, and dug 'up again. WASHINGTON: 1842.

'We dined in the jail: and I told them after dinner how much 'the sight had affected me, and what an awful punishment it was. 'I dwelt upon this; for, although the inspectors are extremely 'kind and benevolent men, I question whether they are sufficiently acquainted with the human mind to know what it is they 'are doing. Indeed, I am sure they do not know. I bore testimony, as every one who sees it must, to the admirable government of the institution (Stanfield is the keeper: grown a little 'younger, that's all); and added that nothing could justify such a 'punishment, but its working a reformation in the prisoners. 'That for short terms—say two years for the maximum—I conceived, especially after what they had told me of its good effects 'in certain cases, it might perhaps be highly beneficial; but that, 'carried to so great an extent, I thought it cruel and unjustifiable; and further, that their sentences for small offences were 'very rigorous, not to say savage. All this, they took like men 'who were really anxious to have one's free opinion and to do 'right. And we were very much pleased with each other, and 'parted in the friendliest way. Talk with the inspectors.

'They sent me back to Philadelphia in a carriage they had sent 'for me in the morning; and then I had to dress in a hurry, and 'follow Kate to Cary's the bookseller's where there was a party. 'He married a sister of Leslie's. There are three Miss Leslies 'here, very accomplished; and one of them has copied all her 'brother's principal pictures. These copies hang about the room. 'We got away from this as soon as we could; and next morning 'had to turn out at five. In the morning I had received and 'shaken hands with five hundred people, so you may suppose 'that I was pretty well tired. Indeed I am obliged to be very 'careful of myself; to avoid smoking and drinking; to get to 'bed soon; and to be particular in respect of what I eat. . . . . Reminded of home. A levee.

'You cannot think how bilious and trying the climate is. One

WASHINGTON: 1842.

'day it is hot summer, without a breath of air; the next, twenty 'degrees below freezing, with a wind blowing that cuts your skin

Changes of temperature.

'like steel. These changes have occurred here several times 'since last Wednesday night.

'I have altered my route, and don't mean to go to Charleston. 'The country, all the way from here, is nothing but a dismal 'swamp; there is a bad night of sea-coasting in the journey; the 'equinoctial gales are blowing hard; and Clay (a most *charming* 'fellow, by the bye), whom I have consulted, strongly dissuades 'me. The weather is intensely hot there; the spring fever is 'coming on; and there is very little to see, after all. We there-'fore go next Wednesday night to Richmond, which we shall

Proposed journeyings.

'reach on Thursday. There, we shall stop three days; my 'object being to see some tobacco plantations. Then we shall 'go by James river back to Baltimore, which we have already 'passed through, and where we shall stay two days. Then we 'shall go West at once, straight through the most gigantic part 'of this continent: across the Alleghany-mountains, and over a 'prairie.

'STILL AT WASHINGTON, Fifteenth March, 1842. . . . It is 'impossible, my dear friend, to tell you what we felt, when Mr. Q '(who is a fearfully sentimental genius, but heartily interested in 'all that concerns us) came to where we were dining last Sunday, 'and sent in a note to the effect that the Caledonia had arrived!

Arrival of Acadia with Caledonia mails.

'Being really assured of her safety, we felt as if the distance be-'tween us and home were diminished by at least one half. There 'was great joy everywhere here, for she had been quite despaired 'of, but *our* joy was beyond all telling. This news came on by 'express. Last night your letters reached us. I was dining with 'a club (for I can't avoid a dinner of that sort, now and then), 'and Kate sent me a note about nine o'clock to say they were 'here. But she didn't open them—which I consider heroic— 'until I came home. That was about half-past ten; and we read 'them until nearly two in the morning.

Letters from England.

'I won't say a word about your letters; except that Kate and 'I have come to a conclusion which makes me tremble in my 'shoes, for we decide that humorous narrative is your forte, and

'not statesmen of the commonwealth. I won't say a word about 'your news; for how could I in that case, while you want to hear 'what we are doing, resist the temptation of expending pages on 'those darling children. . . . . WASHINGTON: 1842.

'I have the privilege of appearing on the floor of both houses 'here, and go to them every day. They are very handsome and 'commodious. There is a great deal of bad speaking, but there 'are a great many very remarkable men, in the legislature: such 'as John Quincey Adams, Clay, Preston, Calhoun, and others: 'with whom I need scarcely add I have been placed in the friend- 'liest relations. Adams is a fine old fellow—seventy-six years 'old, but with most surprising vigour, memory, readiness, and 'pluck. Clay is perfectly enchanting; an irresistible man. There 'are some very noble specimens, too, out of the West. Splendid 'men to look at, hard to deceive, prompt to act, lions in energy, 'Crichtons in varied accomplishments, Indians in quickness of 'eye and gesture, Americans in affectionate and generous im- 'pulse. It would be difficult to exaggerate the nobility of some 'of these glorious fellows. Congress and Senate. Leading American statesmen.

'When Clay retires, as he does this month, Preston will be- 'come the leader of the whig party. He so solemnly assures me 'that the international copyright shall and will be passed, that I 'almost begin to hope; and I shall be entitled to say, if it be, 'that I have brought it about. You have no idea how uni- 'versal the discussion of its merits and demerits has become; or 'how eager for the change I have made a portion of the people. Preston.

'You remember what Webster was, in England. If you *could* 'but see him here! If you could only have seen him when he 'called on us the other day—feigning abstraction in the dreadful 'pressure of affairs of state; rubbing his forehead as one who 'was a-weary of the world; and exhibiting a sublime caricature of 'Lord Burleigh. He is the only thoroughly unreal man I have 'seen on this side the ocean. Heaven help the President! All 'parties are against him, and he appears truly wretched. We go 'to a levee at his house to-night. He has invited me to dinner 'on Friday, but I am obliged to decline; for we leave, per steam- 'boat, to-morrow night. President Tyler.

WASHINGTON: 1842.

'I said I wouldn't write anything more concerning the American 'people, for two months. Second thoughts are best. I shall 'not change, and may as well speak out—to *you*. They are 'friendly, earnest, hospitable, kind, frank, very often accom- 'plished, far less prejudiced than you would suppose, warm- 'hearted, fervent, and enthusiastic. They are chivalrous in their 'universal politeness to women, courteous, obliging, disinterested; 'and, when they conceive a perfect affection for a man (as I may 'venture to say of myself), entirely devoted to him. I have re- 'ceived thousands of people of all ranks and grades, and have 'never once been asked an offensive or unpolite question—except 'by Englishmen, who, when they have been "located" here for 'some years, are worse than the devil in his blackest painting. 'The State is a parent to its people; has a parental care and 'watch over all poor children, women labouring of child, sick 'persons, and captives. The common men render you assistance 'in the streets, and would revolt from the offer of a piece of 'money. The desire to oblige is universal; and I have never 'once travelled in a public conveyance, without making some 'generous acquaintance whom I have been sorry to part from, 'and who has in many cases come on miles, to see us again. 'But I don't like the country. I would not live here, on any 'consideration. It goes against the grain with me. It would 'with you. I think it impossible, utterly impossible, for any 'Englishman to live here, and be happy. I have a confidence 'that I must be right, because I have everything, God knows, to 'lead me to the opposite conclusion: and yet I cannot resist 'coming to this one. As to the causes, they are too many to 'enter upon here. . . . . .

Concerning the American people.

High qualities.

'Surgit amari aliquid.'

'One of two petitions for an international copyright which I 'brought here from American authors, with Irving at their head, 'has been presented to the house of representatives. Clay retains 'the other for presentation to the senate after I have left Wash- 'ington. The presented one has been referred to a committee; the 'Speaker has nominated as its chairman Mr. Kennedy, member 'for Baltimore, who is himself an author and notoriously favour- 'able to such a law; and I am going to assist him in his report.

The copyright petition.

RICHMOND, IN VIRGINIA. Thursday Night, March 17. WASHINGTON: 1842.

RICHMOND. Washington Irving:

'Irving was with me at Washington yesterday, and *wept* '*heartily* at parting. He is a fine fellow, when you know him 'well; and you would relish him, my dear friend, of all things. 'We have laughed together at some absurdities we have encoun- 'tered in company, quite in my vociferous Devonshire-terrace 'style. The "Merrikin" government have treated him, he says, 'most liberally and handsomely in every respect. He thinks of 'sailing for Liverpool on the 7th of April; passing a short time 'in London; and then going to Paris. Perhaps you may meet 'him. If you do, he will know that you are my dearest friend, 'and will open his whole heart to you at once. His secretary of 'legation, Mr. Coggleswell, is a man of very remarkable informa- 'tion, a great traveller, a good talker, and a scholar.

appointed Minister to Spain.

'I am going to sketch you our trip here from Washington, as 'it involves nine miles of a "Virginny Road." That done, I must 'be brief, good brother.' . . .

The reader of the *American Notes* will remember the humorous descriptions of the night steamer on the Potomac, and of the black driver over the Virginia-road. Both were in this letter; which, after three days, he resumed 'At Washington again, 'Monday, March the twenty-first.

'We had intended to go to Baltimore from Richmond, by a 'place called Norfolk: but one of the boats being under repair, I 'found we should probably be detained at this Norfolk two days. 'Therefore we came back here yesterday, by the road we had 'travelled before; lay here last night; and go on to Baltimore 'this afternoon, at four o'clock. It is a journey of only two hours 'and a half. Richmond is a prettily situated town; but, like 'other towns in slave districts (as the planters themselves admit), 'has an aspect of decay and gloom which to an unaccustomed 'eye is *most* distressing. In the black car (for they don't let 'them sit with the whites), on the railroad as we went there, were 'a mother and family whom the steamer was conveying away, to 'sell; retaining the man (the husband and father I mean) on his 'plantation. The children cried the whole way. Yesterday, on

Richmond.

WASHINGTON: 1842.

Incidents of slave-life.

'board the boat, a slave owner and two constables were our 'fellow-passengers. They were coming here in search of two 'negroes who had run away on the previous day. On the bridge 'at Richmond there is a notice against fast driving over it, as it 'is rotten and crazy: penalty—for whites, five dollars; for slaves, 'fifteen stripes. My heart is lightened as if a great load had 'been taken from it, when I think that we are turning our backs 'on this accursed and detested system. I really don't think I 'could have borne it any longer. It is all very well to say "be '"silent on the subject." They won't let you be silent. They '*will* ask you what you think of it; and *will* expatiate on slavery 'as if it were one of the greatest blessings of mankind. "It's '"not," said a hard, bad-looking fellow to me the other day, "it's '"not the interest of a man to use his slaves ill. It's damned '"nonsense that you hear in England."—I told him quietly

Discussion with a slave-holder.

'that it was not a man's interest to get drunk, or to steal, or 'to game, or to indulge in any other vice, but he *did* indulge 'in it for all that. That cruelty, and the abuse of irresponsible 'power, were two of the bad passions of human nature, with the 'gratification of which, considerations of interest or of ruin had 'nothing whatever to do; and that, while every candid man must 'admit that even a slave might be happy enough with a good 'master, all human beings knew that bad masters, cruel masters, 'and masters who disgraced the form they bore, were matters of 'experience and history, whose existence was as undisputed as 'that of slaves themselves. He was a little taken aback by this, 'and asked me if I believed in the bible. Yes, I said, but if any 'man could prove to me that it sanctioned slavery, I would place 'no further credence in it. "Well, then," he said, "by God, sir, '"the niggers must be kept down, and the whites have put down '"the coloured people wherever they have found them." "That's '"the whole question" said I. "Yes, and by God," says he, '"the British had better not stand out on that point when Lord '"Ashburton comes over, for I never felt so warlike as I do now, '"—and that's a fact." I was obliged to accept a public supper

Feeling of South to England.

'in this Richmond, and I saw plainly enough, there, that the 'hatred which these Southern States bear to us as a nation has

'been fanned up and revived again by this Creole business, and 'can scarcely be exaggerated . . . . We were desperately tired 'at Richmond, as we went to a great many places, and received a 'very great number of visitors. We appoint usually two hours in 'every day for this latter purpose, and have our room so full at 'that period that it is difficult to move or breathe. Before we 'left Richmond, a gentleman told me, when I really was so ex- 'hausted that I could hardly stand, that "three people of great '"fashion" were much offended by having been told, when they 'called last evening, that I was tired and not visible, then, but 'would be "at home" from twelve to two next day! Another 'gentleman (no doubt of great fashion also) sent a letter to me 'two hours after I had gone to bed preparatory to rising at four 'next morning, with instructions to the slave who brought it to 'knock me up and wait for an answer!

WASHINGTON: 1842.

Levees at Richmond.

'I am going to break my resolution of accepting no more 'public entertainments, in favour of the originators of the printed 'document overleaf. They live upon the confines of the Indian 'territory, some two thousand miles or more west of New York! 'Think of my dining there! And yet, please God, the festival 'will come off—I should say about the 12th or 15th of next 'month.' . . . .

One more banquet accepted.

The printed document was a series of resolutions, moved at a public meeting attended by all the principal citizens, judges, professors, and doctors, of St. Louis, urgently inviting, to that city of the Far West, the distinguished writer then the guest of America, eulogizing his genius, and tendering to him their warmest hospitalities. He was at Baltimore when he closed his letter.

'BALTIMORE, *Tuesday, March 22nd.*

'I have a great diffidence in running counter to any impression 'formed by a man of Maclise's genius, on a subject he has fully 'considered.' (Referring apparently to some remark by myself on the picture of the Play-scene in *Hamlet* exhibited this year.) 'But I quite agree with you about the King in *Hamlet*. Talking 'of Hamlet, I constantly carry in my great-coat pocket the

Baltimore: 1842.

'*Shakespeare* you bought for me in Liverpool. What an unspeakable source of delight that book is to me! . .

'Your Ontario letter, I found here to-night: sent on by the vigilant and faithful Colden, who makes every thing having reference to us, or our affairs, a labour of the heartiest love. We devoured its contents, greedily. Good Heaven, my dear fellow, how I miss you! and how I count the time 'twixt this and coming home again. Shall I ever forget the day of our parting at Liverpool! when even —— became jolly and radiant in his sympathy with our separation! Never, never shall I forget that time. Ah! how seriously I thought then, and how seriously I have thought many, many times since, of the terrible folly of ever quarrelling with a true friend, on good for nothing trifles! Every little hasty word that has ever passed between us, rose up before me like a reproachful ghost. At this great distance, I seem to look back upon any miserable small interruption of our affectionate intercourse, though only for the instant it has never outlived, with a sort of pity for myself as if I were another creature.

Letters from home.

Self-reproach of a generous nature.

'I have bought another accordion. The steward lent me one, on the passage out, and I regaled the ladies' cabin with my performances. You can't think with what feeling I play *Home Sweet Home* every night, or how pleasantly sad it makes us. . . . . And so God bless you. . . . . I leave space for a short postscript before sealing this, but it will probably contain nothing. The dear, dear children! what a happiness it is to know that they are in such hands.

'P.S. Twenty-third March, 1842. Nothing new. And all well. I have not heard that the Columbia is in, but she is hourly expected. Washington Irving has come on for another leave-taking,* and dines with me to-day. We start for the

Irving's leave-taking.

* At his second visit to America, when in Washington in February 1868, Dickens, replying to a letter in which Irving was named, thus describes the last meeting and leave-taking to which he alludes above. 'Your reference to my dear friend, Washington Irving, renews the vivid impressions reawakened in my mind at Baltimore but the other day. I saw his fine face for the last time in that city. He came there from New York to pass a day or two with me before I went westward; and they

'West, at half after eight to-morrow morning. I send you a 'newspaper, the most respectable in the States, with a very just 'copyright article.' BALTIMORE: 1842.

V.

CANAL AND STEAM BOAT JOURNEYS.

1842.

IT would not be possible that a more vivid or exact impression, than that which is derivable from these letters, could be given of either the genius or the character of the writer. The whole man is here in the supreme hour of his life, and in all the enjoyment of its highest sensations. Inexpressibly sad to me has been the task of going over them, but the surprise has equalled the sadness. I had forgotten what was in them. That they contained, in their first vividness, all the most prominent descriptions of his published book, I knew. But the reproduction of any part of these was not permissible here; and believing that the substance of them had been thus almost wholly embodied in the *American Notes*, when they were lent to assist in its composition, I turned to them with very small expectation of finding anything available for present use. Yet the difficulty has been, not to find but to reject; and the rejection when most unavoidable has not been most easy. Even where the subjects recur that are in the printed AMERICA: 1842. Character in the letters. The *Notes* less satisfactory.

'were made among the most memor- 'able of my life by his delightful 'fancy and genial humour. Some un- 'known admirer of his books and 'mine sent to the hotel a most 'enormous mint-julep, wreathed with 'flowers. We sat, one on either side 'of it, with great solemnity (it filled a 'respectably-sized round table), but 'the solemnity was of very short dura- 'tion. It was quite an enchanted 'julep, and carried us among in- 'numerable people and places that we 'both knew. The julep held out far 'into the night, and my memory never 'saw him afterwards otherwise than 'as bending over it, with his straw, 'with an attempted air of gravity '(after some anecdote involving some 'wonderfully droll and delicate ob- 'servation of character), and then, as 'his eye caught mine, melting into 'that captivating laugh of his, which 'was the brightest and best I have 'ever heard.' Letter to Mr. Lanman in 1868.

AMERICA: 1842.

volume, there is a freshness of first impressions in the letters that renders it no small trial to act strictly on the rule adhered to in these extracts from them. In the *Notes* there is of course very much, masterly in observation and description, of which there is elsewhere no trace; but the passages amplified from the letters have not been improved, and the manly force and directness of some of their views and reflections, conveyed by touches of a picturesque completeness that no elaboration could give, have here and there not been strengthened by rhetorical additions in the printed work. There is also a charm in the letters which the plan adopted in the book necessarily excluded from it. It will always of course have value as a deliberate expression of the results gathered from the American experiences, but the *personal narrative* of this famous visit to America is in the letters alone. In what way his experiences arose, the desire at the outset to see nothing that was not favourable, the slowness with which adverse impressions were formed, and the eager recognition of every better quality that arose and remained above the fault-finding, are discoverable only in the letters.

A charm in letters excluded from *Notes*.

The copyright differences.

Already it is manifest from them that the before-named disappointments, as well of the guest in his entertainers as of the entertainers in their guest, had their beginning in the copyright differences; but it is not less plain that the social dissatisfactions on his side were of even earlier date, and had certainly nothing to do with the country itself. It was objected to him, I well remember, that in making such unfavourable remarks as his published book did on many points, he was assailing the democratic institutions that had formed the character of the nation; but the answer is obvious, that, democratic institutions being universal in America, they were as fairly entitled to share in the good as in the bad; and in what he praised, of which there is here abundant testimony, he must be held to have exalted those institutions as much, as he could be held to depreciate them in what he blamed. He never sets himself up in judgment on the entire people. As we see, from the way in which the letters show us that the opinions he afterwards published were formed, he does not draw conclusions upon only half-finished observation;

Social dissatisfactions.

Fairness of judgment.

and he refrains throughout from the example too strongly set him, even in the terms of his welcome by the writers of America, of flinging one nation in the other's face. He leaves each upon its own ground. His object in his publication, as in the first impressions recorded here, is to exhibit social influences at work as he saw them himself; and it would surely have been of all bad compliments the worst, when resolving, in the tone and with the purpose of a friend, to make public what he had observed in America, if he had supposed that such a country would take truth amiss. AMERICA: 1842. The real compliment to America.

There is however one thing to be especially remembered, as well in reading the letters as in judging of the book which was founded on them. It is a point to which I believe Mr. Emerson directed the attention of his countrymen. Everything of an objectionable kind, whether the author would have it so or not, stands out more prominently and distinctly than matter of the opposite description. The social sin is a more tangible thing than the social virtue. Pertinaciously to insist upon the charities and graces of life, is to outrage their quiet and unobtrusive character; but we incur the danger of extending the vulgarities and indecencies, if we countenance by omitting to expose them. And if this is only kept in view in reading what is here given, the proportion of censure will be found not to overbalance unfairly the admiration and praise. A fact to be remembered.

Apart from such considerations, it is to be also said, the letters, from which I am now printing exactly as they were written, have claims, as mere literature, of an unusual kind. Unrivalled quickness of observation, the rare faculty of seizing out of a multitude of things the thing that is essential, the irresistible play of humour, such pathos as only humourists of this high order possess, and the unwearied unforced vivacity of ever fresh, buoyant, bounding animal spirits, never found more natural, variously easy, or picturesque expression. Written amid such distraction, fatigue, and weariness as they describe, amid the jarring noises of hotels and streets, aboard steamers, on canal boats, and in log huts, there is not an erasure in them. Not external objects only, but feelings, reflections, and thoughts, are photographed into visible Literary merits of the letters.

CANAL BOAT: 1842.

forms with the same unexampled ease. They borrow no help from the matters of which they treat. They would have given to the subjects described, old acquaintance and engrossing interest if they had been about a people in the moon. Of the personal character at the same time self-pourtrayed, others, whose emotions it less vividly awakens, will judge more calmly and clearly than myself. Yet to myself only can it be known how small were the services of friendship that sufficed to rouse all the sensibilities of this beautiful and noble nature. Throughout our life-long intercourse it was the same. His keenness of discrimination failed him never excepting here, when it was lost in the limitless excess of his appreciation of all kindly things; and never did he receive what was meant for a benefit that he was not eager to return a hundredfold. No man more truly generous ever lived.

Personal character pourtrayed.

On board.

His next letter was begun from 'On board the canal boat. 'Going to Pittsburgh. Monday, March twenty-eighth, 1842;' and the difficulties of rejection, to which reference has just been made, have been nowhere felt by me so much. Several of the descriptive masterpieces of the book are in it, with such touches of original freshness as might fairly have justified a reproduction of them in their first form. Among these are the Harrisburgh coach on its way through the Susquehanah valley; the railroad across the mountain; the brown-forester of the Mississippi, the interrogative man in pepper-and-salt, and the affecting scene of the emigrants put ashore as the steamer passes up the Ohio. But all that I may here give, bearing any resemblance to what is given in the *Notes*, are, the opening sketch of the small creature on the top of the queer stage coach, to which the printed version fails to do adequate justice; and an experience to which the interest belongs of having suggested the settlement of Eden in *Martin Chuzzlewit*. . . . . 'We left Baltimore last Thursday the twenty-'fourth at half-past eight in the morning, by railroad; and got to 'a place called York, about twelve. There we dined, and took a 'stage-coach for Harrisburgh; twenty-five miles further. This 'stage-coach was like nothing so much as the body of one of the 'swings you see at a fair set upon four wheels and roofed and 'covered at the sides with painted canvas. There were twelve

Choicest passages of *Notes*.

Queer stage-coach.

'*inside!* I, thank my stars, was on the box. 'The luggage was 'on the roof; among it, a good-sized dining-table, and a big 'rocking-chair. We also took up an intoxicated gentleman, who 'sat for ten miles between me and the coachman; and another 'intoxicated gentleman who got up behind, but in the course of a 'mile or two fell off without hurting himself, and was seen in the 'distant perspective reeling back to the grog-shop where we had 'found him. There were four horses to this land-ark, of course; 'but we did not perform the journey until half-past six o'clock 'that night. . . . The first half of the journey was tame enough, 'but the second lay through the valley of the Susquehanah (I 'think I spell it right, but I haven't that American Geography at 'hand) which is very beautiful. . . . . CANAL BOAT: 1842.

'I think I formerly made a casual remark to you touching the 'precocity of the youth of this country. When we changed horses 'on this journey I got down to stretch my legs, refresh myself 'with a glass of whiskey and water, and shake the wet off my 'great coat—for it was raining very heavily, and continued to do 'so, all night. Mounting on my seat again, I observed something Something on the roof 'lying on the roof of the coach, which I took to be a rather large 'fiddle in a brown bag. In the course of ten miles or so, however, 'I discovered that it had a pair of dirty shoes at one end, and a 'glazed cap at the other; and further observation demonstrated it 'to be a small boy, in a snuff-coloured coat, with his arms quite 'pinioned to his sides by deep forcing into his pockets. He was, 'I presume, a relative or friend of the coachman's, as he lay a-top 'of the luggage, with his face towards the rain; and, except when 'a change of position brought his shoes in contact with my hat, 'he appeared to be asleep. Sir, when we stopped to water the 'horses, about two miles from Harrisburgh, this thing slowly up- which reveals itself. 'reared itself to the height of three foot eight, and fixing its eyes 'on me with a mingled expression of complacency, patronage, 'national independence, and sympathy for all outer barbarians and 'foreigners, said, in shrill piping accents, "Well now, stranger, I '"guess you find this, a'most like an English a'ternoon,—hey?" 'It is unnecessary to add that I thirsted for his blood. . . .

'We had all next morning in Harrisburgh, as the canal-boat At Harrisburgh.

CANAL BOAT: 1842.

'was not to start until three o'clock in the afternoon. 'officials called upon me before I had finished breakfast; an 'the town is the seat of the Pennsylvanian legislature, I wen 'to the capitol. I was very much interested in looking ov

Treaties with Indians.

'number of treaties made with the poor Indians, their signa 'being rough drawings of the creatures or weapons they are c 'after; and the extraordinary drawing of these emblems, sho 'the queer, unused, shaky manner in which each man has 'the pen, struck me very much.

'You know my small respect for our house of commons.

Local legislatures.

'These local legislatures are too insufferably apish of mighty 'legislation, to be seen without bile; for which reason, and be- 'cause a great crowd of senators and ladies had assembled in both 'houses to behold the inimitable, and had already begun to pour 'in upon him even in the secretary's private room, I went back to 'the hotel, with all speed. The members of both branches of the 'legislature followed me there, however, so we had to hold the 'usual levee before our half-past one o'clock dinner. We received

The usual levee.

'a great number of them. Pretty nearly every man spat upon the 'carpet, as usual; and one blew his nose with his fingers—also on 'the carpet, which was a very neat one, the room given up to us 'being the private parlor of the landlord's wife. This has become 'so common since, however, that it scarcely seems worth men- 'tioning. Please to observe that the gentleman in question was a 'member of the senate, which answers (as they very often tell me) 'to our house of lords.

A model innkeeper.

'The innkeeper was the most attentive, civil, and obliging 'person I ever saw in my life. On being asked for his bill, he 'said there was no bill: the honor and pleasure, &c. being more 'than sufficient.* I did not permit this, of course; and begged 'Mr. Q to explain to him, that, travelling four strong, I could 'not hear of it on any account.

The canal boat

'And now I come to the Canal Boat. Bless your heart and 'soul, my dear fellow,—if you could only see us on board the 'canal boat! Let me think, for a moment, at what time of the

* Miss Martineau was perhaps partly right then? *Ante*, 243.

'day or night I should best like you to see us. In the morning? Between five and six in the morning, shall I say? Well! you *would* like to see me, standing on the deck, fishing the dirty water out of the canal with a tin ladle chained to the boat by a long chain; pouring the same into a tin-basin (also chained up in like manner); and scrubbing my face with the jack towel. At night, shall I say? I don't know that you *would* like to look into the cabin at night, only to see me lying on a temporary shelf exactly the width of this sheet of paper when it's open (*I measured it this morning*), with one man above me, and another below; and, in all, eight and twenty in a low cabin, which you can't stand upright in with your hat on. I don't think you would like to look in at breakfast time either, for then these shelves have only just been taken down and put away, and the atmosphere of the place is, as you may suppose, by no means fresh; though there *are* upon the table tea and coffee, and bread and butter, and salmon, and shad, and liver, and steak, and potatoes, and pickles, and ham, and pudding, and sausages; and three and thirty people sitting round it, eating and drinking; and savoury bottles of gin, and whiskey, and brandy, and rum, in the bar hard by; and seven and twenty out of the eight and twenty men, in foul linen, with yellow streams from half-chewed tobacoo trickling down their chins. Perhaps the best time for you to take a peep would be the present: eleven o'clock in the forenoon: when the barber is at his shaving, and the gentlemen are lounging about the stove waiting for their turns, and not more than seventeen are spitting in concert, and two or three are walking overhead (lying down on the luggage every time the man at the helm calls "Bridge!"), and I am writing this in the ladies'-cabin, which is a part of the gentlemen's, and only screened off by a red curtain. Indeed it exactly resembles the dwarf's private apartment in a caravan at a fair; and the gentlemen, generally, represent the spectators at a penny-a-head. The place is just as clean and just as large as that caravan you and I were in at Greenwich-fair last past. Outside, it is exactly like any canal-boat you have seen near the Regent's-park, or elsewhere.

CANAL BOAT: 1842.

In the morning.

At night.

Sixteen inches exactly.

At and after breakfast.

The ladies' cabin.

'You never can conceive what the hawking and spitting is, the

Canal Boat: 1842.

'whole night through. Last night was the worst. *Upon my hon*
'*and word* I was obliged, this morning, to lay my fur-coat on th
Disagreeable. 'deck, and wipe the half dried flakes of spittle from it with m
'handkerchief: and the only surprise seemed to be, that I shou
'consider it necessary to do so. When I turned in last night
'put it on a stool beside me, and there it lay, under a cross fi
'from five men—three opposite; one above; and one below.
Making the best of it. 'make no complaints, and shew no disgust. I am looked upon
'as highly facetious at night, for I crack jokes with everybody
'near me until we fall asleep. I am considered very hardy in
'the morning, for I run up, bare-necked, and plunge my head
'into the half-frozen water, by half-past five o'clock. I am
'respected for my activity, inasmuch as I jump from the boat to
'the towing-path, and walk five or six miles before breakfast;
Hardy habits. 'keeping up with the horses all the time. In a word, they are
'quite astonished to find a sedentary Englishman roughing it so
'well, and taking so much exercise; and question me very much
'on that head. The greater part of the men will sit and shiver
'round the stove all day, rather than put one foot before the
'other. As to having a window open, that's not to be
'thought of.

'We expect to reach Pittsburgh to-night, between eight and
'nine o'clock; and there we ardently hope to find your March
'letters awaiting us. We have had, with the exception of Friday
'afternoon, exquisite weather, but cold. Clear starlight and
'moonlight nights. The canal has run, for the most part, by the
'side of the Susquehanah and Iwanata rivers; and has been
'carried through tremendous obstacles. Yesterday, we crossed
By rail across a mountain. 'the mountain. This is done *by railroad.* . . . You dine at an
'inn upon the mountain; and, including the half hour allowed for
'the meal, are rather more than five hours performing this strange
'part of the journey. The people north and "down east" have
'terrible legends of its danger; but they appear to be exceedingly
'careful, and don't go to work at all wildly. There are some
'queer precipices close to the rails, certainly; but every precaution
'is taken, I am inclined to think, that such difficulties, and such a
'vast work, will admit of.

'The scenery, before you reach the mountains, and when you are on them, and after you have left them, is very fine and grand; and the canal winds its way through some deep, sullen gorges, which, seen by moonlight, are very impressive: though immeasurably inferior to Glencoe, to whose terrors I have not seen the smallest *approach*. We have passed, both in the mountains and elsewhere, a great number of new settlements, and detached log-houses. Their utterly forlorn and miserable appearance baffles all description. I have not seen six cabins out of six hundred, where the windows have been whole. Old hats, old clothes, old boards, old fragments of blanket and paper, are stuffed into the broken glass; and their air is misery and desolation. It pains the eye to see the stumps of great trees thickly strewed in every field of wheat; and never to lose the eternal swamp and dull morass, with hundreds of rotten trunks, of elm and pine and sycamore and logwood, steeped in its unwholesome water; where the frogs so croak at night that after dark there is an incessant sound as if millions of phantom teams, with bells, were travelling through the upper air, at an enormous distance off. It is quite an oppressive circumstance, too, to *come* upon great tracks, where settlers have been burning down the trees; and where their wounded bodies lie about, like those of murdered creatures; while here and there some charred and blackened giant rears two bare arms aloft, and seems to curse his enemies. The prettiest sight I have seen was yesterday, when we—on the heights of the mountain, and in a keen wind—looked down into a valley full of light and softness: catching glimpses of scattered cabins; children running to the doors; dogs bursting out to bark; pigs scampering home, like so many prodigal sons; families sitting out in their gardens; cows gazing upward, with a stupid indifference; men in their shirt-sleeves looking on at their unfinished houses, and planning work for to-morrow;—and the train riding on, high above them, like a storm. But I know this is beautiful—very—very beautiful!

Canal Boat: 1842.

Mountain scenery.

New settlers.

Original of *Chuzzlewit* settlement.

A picture.

'. . I wonder whether you and Mac mean to go to Greenwich-fair! Perhaps you dine at the Crown-and-sceptre to-day, for it's Easter-Monday—who knows! I wish you drank punch,

Canal Boat: 1842.

'dear Forster. It's a shabby thing, not to be able to picture you 'with that cool green glass . . .

Useful word.

'I told you of the many uses of the word "fix." I ask Mr. Q 'on board a steamboat if breakfast be nearly ready, and he tells 'me yes he should think so, for when he was last below the 'steward was "fixing the tables"—in other words, laying the 'cloth. When we have been writing, and I beg him (do you 'remember anything of my love of order, at this distance of 'time?) to collect our papers, he answers that he'll "fix 'em '"presently." So when a man's dressing he's "fixing" himself, 'and when you put yourself under a doctor he "fixes" you in no

Fixings.

'time. T'other night, before we came on board here, when I had 'ordered a bottle of mulled claret and waited some time for it, it 'was put on table with an apology from the landlord (a lieutenant-'colonel) that "he fear'd it wasn't fixed properly." And here, on 'Saturday morning, a Western man, handing the potatoes to 'Mr. Q at breakfast, enquired if he wouldn't take some of "these '"fixings" with his meat. I remained as grave as a judge. I 'catch them looking at me sometimes, and feel that they think I

Party in America.

'don't take any notice. Politics are very high here; dreadfully 'strong; handbills, denunciations, invectives, threats, and quarrels. 'The question is, who shall be the next President. The election 'comes off in *three years and a half* from this time.'

He resumed his letter, 'On board the steam boat from Pittsburgh 'to Cincinnati, April the first, 1842. A very tremulous steam 'boat, which makes my hand shake. This morning, my dear 'friend, this very morning, which, passing by without bringing 'news from England, would have seen us on our way to St. Louis '(viâ Cincinnati and Louisville) with sad hearts and dejected coun-'tenances, and the prospect of remaining for at least three weeks 'longer without any intelligence of those so inexpressibly dear to 'us—this very morning, bright and lucky morning that it was, a

News from home.

'great packet was brought to our bed-room door, from HOME. 'How I have read and re-read your affectionate, hearty, interest-'ing, funny, serious, delightful, and thoroughly Forsterian Columbia 'letter, I will not attempt to tell you; or how glad I am that you 'liked my first; or how afraid I am that my second was not

'written in such good spirits as it should have been; or how glad 'I am again to think that my third *was;* or how I hope you will 'find some amusement from my fourth: this present missive. 'All this, and more affectionate and earnest words than the post 'office would convey at any price, though they have no sharp edges 'to hurt the stamping-clerk—you will understand, I know, without 'expression, or attempt at expression. So having got over the 'first agitation of so much pleasure; and having walked the deck; 'and being now in the cabin, where one party are playing at 'chess, and another party are asleep, and another are talking 'round the stove, and all are spitting; and a persevering bore of 'a horrible New Englander with a droning voice like a gigantic 'bee *will* sit down beside me, though I am writing, and talk 'incessantly, in my very ear, to Kate;—here goes again.

STEAM BOAT: 1842.

'Let me see. I should tell you, first, that we got to Pittsburgh 'between eight and nine o'clock of the evening of the day on 'which I left off at the top of this sheet; and were there received 'by a little man (a very little man) whom I knew years ago in 'London. He rejoiceth in the name of D G; and, when I knew 'him, was in partnership with his father on the stock-exchange, 'and lived handsomely at Dalston. They failed in business soon 'afterwards, and then this little man began to turn to account 'what had previously been his amusement and accomplishment, 'by painting little subjects for the fancy shops. So I lost sight of 'him, nearly ten years ago; and here he turned up t'other day, as 'a portrait painter in Pittsburgh! He had previously written me 'a letter which moved me a good deal, by a kind of quiet inde- 'pendence and contentment it breathed, and still a painful sense 'of being alone, so very far from home. I received it in Phila- 'delphia, and answered it. He dined with us every day of our 'stay in Pittsburgh (they were only three), and was truly gratified 'and delighted to find me unchanged—more so than I can tell 'you. I am very glad to-night to think how much happiness we 'have fortunately been able to give him.

Meets an early acquaintance.

'Smallness of the world.

'Pittsburgh is like Birmingham—at least its townsfolks say so; 'and I didn't contradict them. It is, in one respect. There is a 'great deal of smoke in it. I quite offended a man at our yes-

Of Pittsburg.

Steam Boat: 1842.

'terday's levee, who supposed I was "now quite at home," by 'telling him that the notion of London being so dark a place was 'a popular mistake. We had very queer customers at our recep-

Queer customers at the levees.

'tions, I do assure you. Not least among them, a gentleman 'with his inexpressibles imperfectly buttoned and his waistband 'resting on his thighs, who stood behind the half-opened door, 'and could by no temptation or inducement be prevailed upon to 'come out. There was also another gentleman, with one eye and 'one fixed gooseberry, who stood in a corner motionless like an 'eight-day clock, and glared upon me, as I courteously received 'the Pittsburgians. There were also two red-headed brothers— 'boys—young dragons rather—who hovered about Kate, and 'wouldn't go. A great crowd they were, for three days; and a 'very queer one.'

'Still in the same Boat. *April the Second*, 1842.

Our anniversary: *ante*, 70, 99.

'Many, many, happy returns of the day. It's only eight o'clock 'in the morning now, but we mean to drink your health after 'dinner, in a bumper; and scores of Richmond dinners to us! 'We have some wine (a present sent on board by our Pittsburgh- 'landlord) in our own cabin; and we shall tap it to good pur- 'pose, I assure you; wishing you all manner and kinds of happi- 'ness, and a long life to ourselves that we may be partakers of it. 'We have wondered a hundred times already, whether you and 'Mac will dine anywhere together, in honour of the day. I say 'yes, but Kate says no. She predicts that you'll ask Mac, and he 'won't go. I have not yet heard from him.

The Cincinnati steamer.

'We have a better cabin here, than we had on board the Brit- 'annia; the berths being much wider, and the den having two 'doors: one opening on the ladies' cabin, and one upon a little 'gallery in the stern of the boat. We expect to be at Cincinnati 'some time on Monday morning, and we carry about fifty pas- 'sengers. The cabin for meals goes right through the boat, from 'the prow to the stern, and is very long; only a small portion of 'it being divided off, by a partition of wood and ground-glass, 'for the ladies. We breakfast at half after seven, dine at one,

'and sup at six. Nobody will sit down to any one of these meals, 'though the dishes are smoking on the board, until the ladies 'have appeared, and taken their chairs. It was the same in the 'canal boat. STEAM BOAT: 1842. Deference to ladies.

'The washing department is a little more civilized than it was 'on the canal, but bad is the best. Indeed the Americans when 'they are travelling, as Miss Martineau seems disposed to admit, 'are exceedingly negligent: not to say dirty. To the best of my 'making out, the ladies, under most circumstances, are content 'with smearing their hands and faces in a very small quantity of 'water. So are the men; who superadd to that mode of ablution 'a hasty use of the common brush and comb. It is quite a prac- 'tice, too, to wear but one cotton shirt a week, and three or four 'fine linen *fronts*. Anne reports that this is Mr. Q's course of 'proceeding: and my portrait-painting friend told me that it was 'the case with pretty nearly all his sitters; so that when he 'bought a piece of cloth not long ago and instructed the semp- 'stress to make it *all* into shirts, not fronts, she thought him 'deranged. Frugality in water and linen.

'My friend the New Englander, of whom I wrote last night, is 'perhaps the most intolerable bore on this vast continent. He 'drones, and snuffles, and writes poems, and talks small philo- 'sophy and metaphysics, and never *will* be quiet, under any 'circumstances. He is going to a great temperance convention 'at Cincinnati; along with a doctor of whom I saw something at 'Pittsburgh. The doctor, in addition to being everything that 'the New Englander is, is a phrenologist besides. I dodge them 'about the boat. Whenever I appear on deck, I see them bearing 'down upon me—and fly. The New Englander was very anxious 'last night that he and I should "form a magnetic chain," and 'magnetize the doctor, for the benefit of all incredulous pas- 'sengers; but I declined, on the plea of tremendous occupation 'in the way of letter-writing. A New Englander.

'And speaking of magnetism, let me tell you that the other 'night at Pittsburgh, there being present only Mr. Q and the 'portrait-painter, Kate sat down, laughing, for me to try my hand 'upon her. I had been holding forth upon the subject rather Magnetic experiments.

Steam Boat: 1842.

'luminously, and asserting that I thought I could exercise the 'influence, but had never tried. In six minutes, I magnetized 'her into hysterics, and then into the magnetic sleep. I tried 'again next night, and she fell into the slumber in little more 'than two minutes. . . . I can wake her with perfect ease; but 'I confess (not being prepared for anything so sudden and com- 'plete) I was on the first occasion rather alarmed . . . . The 'Western parts being sometimes hazardous, I have fitted out the

Life preservers.

'whole of my little company with Life Preservers, which I 'inflate with great solemnity when we get aboard any boat, and 'keep, as Mrs. Cluppins did her umbrella in the court of common 'pleas, ready for use upon a moment's notice.' . . .

He resumed his letter, on 'Sunday, April the third,' with allusion to a general who had called upon him in Washington with two literary ladies, and had written to him next day for an immediate interview, as 'the two LL's' were ambitious of the honour of a personal introduction. 'Besides the doctor and the dread New 'Englander, we have on board that valiant general who wrote to 'me about the "two LL's." He is an old, old man with a weazen 'face, and the remains of a pigeon-breast in his military surtout. 'He is acutely gentlemanly and officer-like. The breast has so 'subsided, and the face has become so strongly marked, that he 'seems, like a pigeon-pie, to show only the feet of the bird out- 'side, and to keep the rest to himself. He is perhaps *the* most

Bores.

'horrible bore in this country. And I am quite serious when I 'say that I do not believe there are, on the whole earth besides, 'so many intensified bores as in these United States. No man 'can form an adequate idea of the real meaning of the word, 'without coming here. There are no particular characters on 'board, with these three exceptions. Indeed I seldom see the 'passengers but at meal-times, as I read and write in our own 'little state room. . . . I have smuggled two chairs into our 'crib; and write this on a book upon my knee. Everything is in

Habits of neatness.

'the neatest order, of course; and my shaving tackle, dressing 'case, brushes, books, and papers, are arranged with as much 'precision as if we were going to remain here a month. Thank 'God we are not.

'The average width of the river rather exceeds that of the 'Thames at Greenwich. In parts it is much broader; and then 'there is usually a green island, covered with trees, dividing it 'into two streams. Occasionally we stop for a few minutes at a 'small town, or village (I ought to say city, everything is a city 'here); but the banks are for the most part deep solitudes, over- 'grown with trees, which, in these western latitudes, are already 'in leaf and very green . . . . . STEAM BOAT: 1842. The Ohio.

'All this I see, as I write, from the little door into the stern- 'gallery which I mentioned just now. It don't happen six times 'in a day that any other passenger comes near it; and, as the 'weather is amply warm enough to admit of our sitting with it open, 'here we remain from morning until night: reading, writing, 'talking. What our theme of conversation is, I need not tell you. 'No beauty or variety makes us weary less for home. We count 'the days, and say, "When May comes, and we can say—*next* '"*month*—the time will seem almost gone." We are never tired 'of imagining what you are all about. I allow of no calculation 'for the difference of clocks, but insist on a corresponding minute 'in London. It is much the shortest way, and best. . . . Yes- 'terday, we drank your health and many happy returns—in wine, 'after dinner; in a small milk-pot jug of gin-punch, at night. And 'when I made a temporary table, to hold the little candlestick, 'of one of my dressing-case trays; cunningly inserted under the 'mattress of my berth with a weight a-top of it to keep it in its 'place, so that it made a perfectly exquisite bracket; we agreed, 'that, please God, this should be a joke at the Star-and-garter on 'the second of April eighteen hundred and forty three. If your 'blank *can* be surpassed . . . believe me ours transcends it. My 'heart gets, sometimes, SORE for home. Wearying for home. 2nd April.

'At Pittsburgh I saw another solitary confinement prison: 'Pittsburgh being also in Pennsylvania. A horrible thought 'occurred to me when I was recalling all I had seen, that night. '*What if ghosts be one of the terrors of the jails?* I have pondered 'on it often, since then. The utter solitude by day and night; 'the many hours of darkness; the silence of death; the mind for 'ever brooding on melancholy themes, and having no relief; Another solitary prison.

Steam Boat: 1842.

New terror to solitude.

'sometimes an evil conscience very busy: imagine a prisoner 'covering up his head in the bedclothes and looking out from 'time to time, with a ghastly dread of some inexplicable silent 'figure that always sits upon his bed, or stands (if a thing can be 'said to stand, that never walks as men do) in the same corner 'of his cell. The more I think of it, the more certain I feel that 'not a few of these men (during a portion of their imprisonment 'at least) are nightly visited by spectres. I did ask one man in 'this last jail, if he dreamed much. He gave me a most extra-'ordinary look, and said—under his breath—in a whisper—'"No."'. . . .

'Cincinnati. *Fourth April*, 1842.

Cincinnati: 1842.

'We arrived here this morning: about three o'clock, I believe, 'but I was fast asleep in my berth. I turned out soon after six, 'dressed, and breakfasted on board. About half after eight, we 'came ashore and drove to the hotel, to which we had written on 'from Pittsburgh ordering rooms; and which is within a stone's 'throw of the boat wharf. Before I had issued an official notifi-

Two judges in attendance.

'cation that we were "not at home," two judges called, on the 'part of the inhabitants, to know when we would receive the 'townspeople. We appointed to-morrow morning, from half-past 'eleven to one; arranged to go out, with these two gentlemen, 'to see the town, *at* one; and were fixed for an evening party 'to-morrow night at the house of one of them. On Wednesday 'morning we go on by the mail-boat to Louisville, a trip of four-'teen hours; and from that place proceed in the next good boat 'to St. Louis, which is a voyage of four days. Finding from my 'judicial friends (well-informed and most agreeable gentlemen)

Change of route.

'this morning, that the prairie travel to Chicago is a very fatiguing 'one, and that the lakes are stormy, sea-sicky, and not over-safe 'at this season, I wrote by our captain to St. Louis (for the boat 'that brought us here goes on there), to the effect that I should 'not take the lake route, but should come back here; and should 'visit the prairies, which are within thirty miles of St. Louis, 'immediately on my arrival there. . . . .

'I have walked to the window, since I turned this page, to see

'what aspect the town wears. We are in a wide street: paved in 'the carriage way with small white stones, and in the footway 'with small red tiles. The houses are for the most part one story 'high; some are of wood; others of a clean white brick. Nearly 'all have green blinds outside every window. The principal 'shops over the way, are, according to the inscriptions over them, 'a Large Bread Bakery; a Book Bindery; a Dry Goods Store; 'and a Carriage Repository; the last-named establishment looking 'very like an exceedingly small retail coal-shed. On the pave-'ment under our window, a black man is chopping wood; and 'another black man is talking (confidentially) to a pig. The 'public table, at this hotel and at the hotel opposite, has just 'now finished dinner. The diners are collected on the pavement, 'on both sides of the way, picking their teeth, and talking. The 'day being warm, some of them have brought chairs into the 'street. Some are on three chairs; some on two; and some, 'in defiance of all known laws of gravity, are sitting quite 'comfortably on one: with three of the chair's legs, and their 'own two, high up in the air. The loungers, underneath our 'window, are talking of a great Temperance convention which 'comes off here to-morrow. Others, about me. Others, about 'England. Sir Robert Peel is popular here, with everybody....'

CINCINNATI: 1842.

Description of the city.

On the pavement.

VI.

FAR WEST: TO NIAGARA FALLS.

1842.

THE next letter described his experiences in the Far West, his stay in St. Louis, his visit to a Prairie, the return to Cincinnati, and, after a stage-coach ride from that city to Columbus, the travel thence to Sandusky, and so, by Lake Erie, to the Falls of Niagara. All these subjects appear in the *Notes*, but nothing printed there is repeated in the extracts now to be given. Of the closing passages of his journey, when he turned from Columbus

Descriptions in letters and in *Notes*.

Back to Cincinnati: 1842.

in the direction of home, the story, here for the first time told, is in his most characteristic vein; the account that will be found of the Prairie will probably be preferred to what is given in the *Notes;* the Cincinnati sketches are very pleasant; and even such a description as that of the Niagara Falls, of which so much is made in the book, has here an independent novelty and freshness. The first vividness is in his letter. The naturalness of associating, with a grandeur so mighty and resistless, no image or sense but of repose, is best presented suddenly; and, in a few words, we have the material as well as moral beauty of a scene unrivalled in its kind upon the earth. The instant impression we find to be worth more than the eloquent recollection.

The captain of the boat that had dropped them at Cincinnati and gone to St. Louis, had stayed in the latter place until they were able to join and return with him; this letter bears date accordingly, 'On board the Messenger again. Going from 'St. Louis back to Cincinnati. Friday, fifteenth April, 1842;' and its first paragraph is an outline of the movements which it afterwards describes in detail. 'We remained in Cincinnati one 'whole day after the date of my last, and left on Wednesday 'morning the 6th. We reached Louisville soon after midnight 'on the same night; and slept there. Next day at one o'clock 'we put ourselves on board another steamer, and travelled on 'until last Sunday evening the tenth; when we reached St. Louis 'at about nine o'clock. The next day we devoted to seeing the 'city. Next day, Tuesday the twelfth, I started off with a party 'of men (we were fourteen in all) to see a prairie; returned to 'St. Louis about noon on the thirteenth; attended a soirée and 'ball—not a dinner—given in my honour that night; and 'yesterday afternoon at four o'clock we turned our faces home-'wards. Thank Heaven!

Outline of westward travel.

An Arabian-night city.

'Cincinnati is only fifty years old, but is a very beautiful city: 'I think the prettiest place I have seen here, except Boston. It 'has risen out of the forest like an Arabian-night city; is well laid 'out; ornamented in the suburbs with pretty villas; and above 'all, for this is a very rare feature in America, has smooth turf-'plots and well kept gardens. There happened to be a great

'temperance festival; and the procession mustered under, and 'passed, our windows early in the morning. I suppose they were 'twenty thousand strong, at least. Some of the banners were 'quaint and odd enough. The ship-carpenters, for instance, 'displayed on one side of their flag, the good Ship Temperance 'in full sail; on the other, the Steamer Alcohol blowing up sky-'high. The Irishmen had a portrait of Father Mathew, you may 'be sure. And Washington's broad lower jaw (by the bye, 'Washington had not a pleasant face) figured in all parts of the 'ranks. In a kind of square at one outskirt of the city, they 'divided into bodies, and were addressed by different speakers. 'Drier speaking I never heard. I own that I felt quite un-'comfortable to think they could take the taste of it out of their 'mouths with nothing better than water.

BACK TO CINCINNATI: 1842.

Temperance festival.

'In the evening we went to a party at Judge Walker's, and 'were introduced to at least one hundred and fifty first-rate bores, 'separately and singly. I was required to sit down by the 'greater part of them, and talk!* In the night we were serenaded

A party at Judge Walker's.

* A young lady's account of this party, written next morning, and quoted in one of the American memoirs of Dickens, enables us to contemplate his suffering from the point of view of those who inflicted it. 'I 'went last evening to a party at Judge 'Walker's, given to the hero of the 'day. . . . When we reached the 'house Mr. Dickens had left the 'crowded rooms, and was in the hall 'with his wife, about taking his de-'parture when we entered the door. 'We were introduced to him in our 'wrapping; and in the flurry and 'embarrassment of the meeting, one 'of the party dropped a parcel, con-'taining shoes, gloves, &c. Mr. 'Dickens, stooping, gathered them 'up and restored them with a laugh-'ing remark, and we bounded up 'stairs to get our things off. Hasten-'ing down again, we found him with 'Mrs. Dickens seated upon a sofa, 'surrounded by a group of ladies; 'Judge Walker having requested him 'to delay his departure for a few 'moments, for the gratification of 'some tardy friends who had just 'arrived, ourselves among the num-'ber. Declining to re-enter the rooms 'where he had already taken leave of 'the guests, he had seated himself in 'the hall. He is young and hand-'some, has a mellow, beautiful eye, 'fine brow, and abundant hair. His 'mouth is large, and his smile so 'bright it seemed to shed light and 'happiness all about him. His man-'ner is easy, negligent, but not elegant. 'His dress was foppish; in fact, he 'was overdressed, yet his garments 'were worn so easily they appeared to 'be a necessary part of him. (!) He 'had a dark coat, with lighter panta-'loons; a black waistcoat, embroi-'dered with coloured flowers; and 'about his neck, covering his white

The party—from another view.

Back to Cincinnati: 1842.

'(as we usually are in every place we come to), and very well 'serenaded, I assure you. But we were very much knocked up. 'I really think my face has acquired a fixed expression of sadness 'from the constant and unmitigated boring I endure. The LL's 'have carried away all my cheerfulness. There is a line in my 'chin (on the right side of the under-lip), indelibly fixed there by 'the New-Englander I told you of in my last. I have the print 'of a crow's foot on the outside of my left eye, which I attribute 'to the literary characters of small towns. A dimple has vanished 'from my cheek, which I felt myself robbed of at the time by a 'wise legislator. But on the other hand I am really indebted 'for a good broad grin to PE, literary critic of Philadelphia, and 'sole proprietor of the English language in its grammatical and 'idiomatical purity; to PE, with the shiny straight hair and 'turned-down shirt collar, who taketh all of us English men of 'letters to task in print, roundly and uncompromisingly, but told 'me at the same time that I had "awakened a new era" in his 'mind. . . .

Mournful results of boredom.

'The last 200 miles of the voyage from Cincinnati to St. Louis 'are upon the Mississippi, for you come down the Ohio to its 'mouth. It is well for society that this Mississippi, the renowned 'father of waters, had no children who take after him. It is the

Young lady's description and disappointment.

'shirt-front, was a black neckcloth, 'also embroidered in colors, in which 'were placed two large diamond pins 'connected by a chain. A gold watch-'chain, and a large red rose in his 'button-hole, completed his toilet. 'He appeared a little weary, but 'answered the remarks made to him— 'for he originated none—in an agree-'able manner. Mr. Beard's portrait 'of Fagin was so placed in the room 'that we could see it from where we 'stood surrounding him. One of the 'ladies asked him if it was his idea of 'the Jew. He replied, "Very nearly." 'Another laughingly requested that 'he would give her the rose he wore, 'as a memento. He shook his head 'and said: "That will not do; he '"could not give it to one; the others '"would be jealous." A half dozen 'then insisted on having it, where-'upon he proposed to divide the 'leaves among them. In taking the 'rose from his coat, either by design 'or accident, the leaves loosened and 'fell upon the floor, and amid con-'siderable laughter the ladies stooped 'and gathered them. He remained 'some twenty minutes perhaps in 'the hall, and then took his leave. 'I must confess to considerable dis-'appointment in the personal (*sic*) of 'my idol. I felt that his throne was 'shaken, although it never could be 'destroyed.' This appalling pic-ture supplements and sufficiently ex-plains the mournful passage in the text.

'beastliest river in the world.' . . . (His description is in the *Notes*.) FROM CINCINNATI TO ST. LOUIS: 1842.

'Conceive the pleasure of rushing down this stream by night '(as we did last night) at the rate of fifteen miles an hour) striking 'against floating blocks of timber every instant; and dreading 'some infernal blow at every bump. The helmsman in these 'boats is in a little glass-house upon the roof. In the Mississippi, 'another man stands in the very head of the vessel, listening and 'watching intently; listening, because they can tell in dark nights 'by the noise when any great obstruction is at hand. This man 'holds the rope of a large bell which hangs close to the wheel-'house, and whenever he pulls it, the engine is to stop directly, 'and not to stir until he rings again. Last night, this bell rang 'at least once in every five minutes; and at each alarm there 'was a concussion which nearly flung one out of bed. . . . While 'I have been writing this account, we have shot out of that 'hideous river, thanks be to God; never to see it again, I hope, 'but in a nightmare. We are now on the smooth Ohio, and the 'change is like the transition from pain to perfect ease.

Down the Mississippi.

Its perils.

'We had a very crowded levee in St. Louis. Of course the 'paper had an account of it. If I were to drop a letter in the 'street, it would be in the newspaper next day, and nobody 'would think its publication an outrage. The editor objected to 'my hair, as not curling sufficiently. He admitted an eye; but 'objected again to dress, as being somewhat foppish, "and '"indeed perhaps rather flash.—But such," he benevolently 'adds, "are the differences between American and English '"taste—rendered more apparent, perhaps, by all the other '"gentlemen present being dressed in black." Oh, that you 'could have seen the other gentlemen! . . . .

ST. LOUIS: a levee.

'A St. Louis lady complimented Kate upon her voice and 'manner of speaking assuring her that she should never have 'suspected her of being Scotch, or even English. She was so 'obliging as to add that she would have taken her for an 'American, anywhere: which she (Kate) was no doubt aware 'was a very great compliment, as the Americans were admitted 'on all hands to have greatly refined upon the English language!

Compliments.

St. Louis: 1842.

Peculiarities of speech.

'I need not tell you that out of Boston and New York a nasal 'drawl is universal, but I may as well hint that the prevailing 'grammar is also more than doubtful; that the oddest vulgarisms 'are received idioms; that all the women who have been bred in 'slave-states speak more or less like negroes, from having been 'constantly in their childhood with black nurses; and that the 'most fashionable and aristocratic (these are two words in great 'use), instead of asking you in what place you were born, enquire 'where you "hail from"!!

Lord Ashburton's arrival.

'Lord Ashburton arrived at Annapolis t'other day, after a 'voyage of forty odd days in heavy weather. Straightway the 'newspapers state, on the authority of a correspondent who '"rowed round the ship" (I leave you to fancy her condition), 'that America need fear no superiority from England, in respect 'of her wooden walls. The same correspondent is "quite '"pleased" with the frank manner of the English officers; and 'patronizes them as being, for John Bulls, quite refined. My 'face, like Haji Baba's, turns upside down, and my liver is 'changed to water, when I come upon such things, and think 'who writes and who read them. . . .

Talk with a judge on slavery.

'They won't let me alone about slavery. A certain Judge in 'St. Louis went so far yesterday, that I fell upon him (to the 'indescribable horror of the man who brought him) and told him 'a piece of my mind. I said that I was very averse to speaking 'on the subject here, and always forbore, if possible: but when 'he pitied our national ignorance of the truths of slavery, I must 'remind him that we went upon indisputable records, obtained 'after many years of careful investigation, and at all sorts of self-'sacrifice; and that I believed we were much more competent to 'judge of its atrocity and horror, than he who had been brought 'up in the midst of it. I told him that I could sympathise with 'men who admitted it to be a dreadful evil, but frankly confessed 'their inability to devise a means of getting rid of it: but that 'men who spoke of it as a blessing, as a matter of course, as a 'state of things to be desired, were out of the pale of reason; 'and that for them to speak of ignorance or prejudice was an 'absurdity too ridiculous to be combated. . . .

'It is not six years ago, since a slave in this very same St. Louis, 'being arrested (I forget for what), and knowing he had no chance 'of a fair trial be his offence what it might, drew his bowie knife 'and ripped the constable across the body. A scuffle ensuing, 'the desperate negro stabbed two others with the same weapon. 'The mob who gathered round (among whom were men of mark, 'wealth, and influence in the place) overpowered him by numbers; 'carried him away to a piece of open ground beyond the city; '*and burned him alive.* This, I say, was done within six years in 'broad day; in a city with its courts, lawyers, tipstaffs, judges, 'jails, and hangman; and not a hair on the head of one of those 'men has been hurt to this day. And it is, believe me, it is the 'miserable, wretched independence in small things; the paltry 'republicanism which recoils from honest service to an honest 'man, but does not shrink from every trick, artifice, and knavery 'in business; that makes these slaves necessary, and will render 'them so, until the indignation of other countries sets them free.

St. Louis: 1842. Slavery. A negro burnt alive.

'They say the slaves are fond of their masters. Look at this 'pretty vignette * (part of the stock-in-trade of a newspaper), and 'judge how you would feel, when men, looking in your face, told 'you such tales with the newspaper lying on the table. In all 'the slave districts, advertisements for runaways are as much 'matters of course as the announcement of the play for the 'evening with us. The poor creatures themselves fairly worship 'English people: they would do anything for them. They are 'perfectly acquainted with all that takes place in reference to 'emancipation; and *of course* their attachment to us grows out 'of their deep devotion to their owners. I cut this illustration 'out of a newspaper which had a leader in reference to *the 'abominable and hellish doctrine of Abolition—repugnant alike to 'every law of God and Nature.* "I know something," said a Dr. 'Bartlett (a very accomplished man), late a fellow-passenger of 'ours: "I know something of their fondness for their masters.

Feeling of slaves themselves. Dr. Bartlett.

* 'RUNAWAY NEGRO IN JAIL' was the heading of the advertisement enclosed, which had a woodcut of master and slave in its corner, and announced that Wilford Garner, sheriff and jailer of Chicot County, Arkansas, requested owner to come and prove property—or——

ST. LOUIS: 1842.

'"I live in Kentucky; and I can assert upon my honour, that,
'"in my neighbourhood, it is as common for a runaway slave,
'"retaken, to draw his bowie knife and rip his owner's bowels
'"open, as it is for you to see a drunken fight in London."

'SAME BOAT, *Saturday Sixteenth April*, 1842.

Pretty scene.

'Let me tell you, my dear Forster, before I forget it, a pretty 'little scene we had on board the boat between Louisville 'and St. Louis, as we were going to the latter place. It is 'not much to tell, but it was very pleasant and interesting to 'witness.'

What follows has been printed in the *Notes*, and ought not, by the rule I have laid down, to be given here. But, beautiful as the printed description is, it has not profited by the alteration of some touches and the omission of others in the first fresh version of it, which, for that reason, I here preserve—one of the most charming soul-felt pictures of character and emotion that ever warmed the heart in fact or fiction. It was, I think, Jeffrey's favourite passage in all the writings of Dickens: and certainly, if anyone would learn the secret of their popularity, it is to be read in the observation and description of this little incident.

A small mother:

'There was a little woman on board, with a little baby; and 'both little woman and little child were cheerful, good-looking, 'bright-eyed, and fair to see. The little woman had been passing 'a long time with a sick mother in New York, and had left her 'home in St. Louis in that condition in which ladies who truly 'love their lords desire to be. The baby had been born in her 'mother's house, and she had not seen her husband (to whom returning to her husband. 'she was now returning) for twelve months: having left him a 'month or two after their marriage. Well, to be sure, there never 'was a little woman so full of hope, and tenderness, and love, and 'anxiety, as this little woman was: and there she was, all the 'livelong day, wondering whether "he" would be at the wharf; 'and whether "he" had got her letter; and whether, if she sent 'the baby on shore by somebody else, "*he*" *would know it*,

'*meeting it in the street*: which, seeing that he had never set eyes St. Louis: 1842.
'upon it in his life, was not very likely in the abstract, but was
'probable enough to the young mother. She was such an artless
'little creature; and was in such a sunny, beaming, hopeful state;
'and let out all this matter, clinging close about her heart, so
'freely; that all the other lady passengers entered into the spirit
'of it as much as she: and the captain (who heard all about it The ladies and the captain.
'from his wife) was wondrous sly, I promise you: enquiring,
'every time we met at table, whether she expected anybody to
'meet her at St. Louis, and supposing she wouldn't want to go
'ashore the night we reached it, and cutting many other dry jokes
'which convulsed all his hearers, but especially the ladies. There
'was one little, weazen, dried-apple old woman among them, who
'took occasion to doubt the constancy of husbands under such
'circumstances of bereavement; and there was another lady (with
'a lap dog), old enough to moralize on the lightness of human
'affections, and yet not so old that she could help nursing the
'baby now and then, or laughing with the rest when the little
'woman called it by its father's name, and asked it all manner of The little mother and her baby.
'fantastic questions concerning him, in the joy of her heart. It
'was something of a blow to the little woman, that when we were
'within twenty miles of our destination, it became clearly neces-
'sary to put the baby to bed; but she got over that with the same
'good humour, tied a little handkerchief over her little head, and
'came out into the gallery with the rest. Then, such an oracle
'as she became in reference to the localities! and such facetious-
'ness as was displayed by the married ladies! and such sympathy
'as was shown by the single ones! and such peals of laughter as
'the little woman herself (who would just as soon have cried)
'greeted every jest with! At last, there were the lights of St. Louis in sight.
'St. Louis—and here was the wharf—and those were the steps—
'and the little woman, covering her face with her hands, and
'laughing, or seeming to laugh, more than ever, ran into her own
'cabin, and shut herself up tight. I have no doubt, that, in the
'charming inconsistency of such excitement, she stopped her ears
'lest she should hear "him" asking for her; but I didn't see her
'do it. Then a great crowd of people rushed on board, though

St. Louis: 1842.

'the boat was not yet made fast, and was staggering about among 'the other boats to find a landing-place; and everybody looked 'for the husband, and nobody saw him; when all of a sudden, 'right in the midst of them—God knows how she ever got there

The meeting.

'—there was the little woman hugging with both arms round the 'neck of a fine, good-looking, sturdy fellow! And in a moment 'afterwards, there she was again, dragging him through the small 'door of her small cabin, to look at the baby as he lay asleep!— 'What a good thing it is to know that so many of us would have 'been quite downhearted and sorry if that husband had failed to 'come.'

He then resumes: but in what follows nothing is repeated that will be found in his printed description of the jaunt to the looking-glass prairie.

Trip to a prairie.

'But about the Prairie—it is not, I must confess, so good in 'its way as this; but I'll tell you all about that too, and leave you 'to judge for yourself. Tuesday the 12th was the day fixed; and 'we were to start at five in the morning—sharp. I turned out at 'four; shaved and dressed; got some bread and milk; and 'throwing up the window, looked down into the street. Deuce a 'coach was there, nor did anybody seem to be stirring in the 'house. I waited until half-past five; but no preparations being 'visible even then, I left Mr. Q to look out, and lay down upon 'the bed again. There I slept until nearly seven, when I was 'called. . . . Exclusive of Mr. Q and myself, there were twelve 'of my committee in the party: all lawyers except one. He was 'an intelligent, mild, well-informed gentleman of my own age— 'the unitarian minister of the place. With him, and two other 'companions, I got into the first coach. . . .

A good inn.

'We halted at so good an inn at Lebanon that we resolved to 'return there at night, if possible. One would scarcely find a 'better village alehouse of a homely kind in England. During 'our halt I walked into the village, and met a *dwelling-house* 'coming down-hill at a good round trot, drawn by some twenty 'oxen! We resumed our journey as soon as possible, and got

On the prairie at sunset.

'upon the looking-glass prairie at sunset. We halted near 'a solitary log-house for the sake of its water; unpacked

'the baskets; formed an encampment with the carriages; and 'dined. ST. LOUIS: 1842.

'Now, a prairie is undoubtedly worth seeing—but more that 'one may say one has seen it, than for any sublimity it possesses 'in itself. Like most things, great or small, in this country, you 'hear of it with considerable exaggerations. Basil Hall was really 'quite right in depreciating the general character of the scenery. General character 'The widely-famed Far West is not to be compared with even the of scenery. 'tamest portions of Scotland or Wales. You stand upon the 'prairie, and see the unbroken horizon all round you. You are 'on a great plain, which is like a sea without water. I am ex-'ceedingly fond of wild and lonely scenery, and believe that I 'have the faculty of being as much impressed by it as any man 'living. But the prairie fell, by far, short of my preconceived 'idea. I felt no such emotions as I do in crossing Salisbury 'plain. The excessive flatness of the scene makes it dreary, but 'tame. Grandeur is certainly not its characteristic. I retired 'from the rest of the party, to understand my own feelings the 'better; and looked all round, again and again. It was fine. It 'was worth the ride. The sun was going down, very red and A prairie described. 'bright; and the prospect looked like that ruddy sketch of 'Catlin's, which attracted our attention (you remember?); except 'that there was not so much ground as he represents, between the 'spectator and the horizon. But to say (as the fashion is, here) 'that the sight is a landmark in one's existence, and awakens a 'new set of sensations, is sheer gammon. I would say to every 'man who can't see a prairie—go to Salisbury plain, Marlborough 'downs, or any of the broad, high, open lands near the sea. 'Many of them are fully as impressive; and Salisbury plain is '*decidedly* more so.

'We had brought roast fowls, buffalo's tongue, ham, bread, 'cheese, butter, biscuits, sherry, champagne, lemons and sugar 'for punch, and abundance of ice. It was a delicious meal: and A pic-nic. 'as they were most anxious that I should be pleased, I warmed 'myself into a state of surpassing jollity; proposed toasts from 'the coach-box (which was the chair); ate and drank with the 'best; and made, I believe, an excellent companion to a very

St. Louis: 1842.

'friendly companionable party. In an hour or so, we packed up, 'and drove back to the inn at Lebanon. While supper was pre- 'paring, I took a pleasant walk with my unitarian friend; and 'when it was over (we drank nothing with it but tea and coffee) 'we went to bed. The clergyman and I had an exquisitely clean 'little chamber of our own: and the rest of the party were quar- 'tered overhead. . . . .

Soirée at Planter's-house.

'We got back to St. Louis soon after twelve at noon; and I 'rested during the remainder of the day. The soirée came off at 'night, in a very good ball-room at our inn—the Planter's-house. 'The whole of the guests were introduced to us, singly. We were 'glad enough, you may believe, to come away at midnight; and 'were very tired. Yesterday, I wore a blouse. To-day, a fur-coat. 'Trying changes!

'In the same Boat.
'*Sunday, Sixteenth April*, 1842.

Planter's inn.

'The inns in these outlandish corners of the world would 'astonish you by their goodness. The Planter's-house is as large 'as the Middlesex-hospital and built very much on our hospital 'plan, with long wards abundantly ventilated, and plain white- 'washed walls. They had a famous notion of sending up at 'breakfast-time large glasses of new milk with blocks of ice in 'them as clear as crystal. Our table was abundantly supplied 'indeed at every meal. One day when Kate and I were dining 'alone together, in our own room, we counted sixteen dishes on 'the table at the same time.

No grey heads in St. Louis.

'The society is pretty rough, and intolerably conceited. All 'the inhabitants are young. *I didn't see one grey head in St.* '*Louis*. There is an island close by, called bloody island. It is 'the duelling ground of St. Louis; and is so called from the last 'fatal duel which was fought there. It was a pistol duel, breast 'to breast, and both parties fell dead at the same time. One of 'our prairie party (a young man) had acted there as second in

Duelling.

'several encounters. The last occasion was a duel with rifles, at 'forty paces; and coming home he told us how he had bought 'his man a coat of green linen to fight in, woollen being usually

'fatal to rifle wounds. Prairie is variously called (on the refine- SANDUSKY: 1842.
'ment principle I suppose) Para*a*rer; par*e*rer; and paro*a*rer.
'I am afraid, my dear fellow, you will have had great difficulty
'in reading all the foregoing text. I have written it, very labor-
'iously, on my knee; and the engine throbs and starts as if the
'boat were possessed with a devil.

'SANDUSKY.

'*Sunday, Twenty-fourth April,* 1842.

'We went ashore at Louisville this night week, where I left off, From Louisville to Cincinnati.
'two lines above; and slept at the hotel, in which we had put up
'before. The Messenger being abominably slow, we got our
'luggage out next morning, and started on again at eleven o'clock
'in the Benjamin Franklin mail boat: a splendid vessel with a
'cabin more than two hundred feet long, and little state-rooms
'affording proportionate conveniences. She got in at Cincinnati
'by one o'clock next morning, when we landed in the dark and
'went back to our old hotel. As we made our way on foot over
'the broken pavement, Anne measured her length upon the
'ground, but didn't hurt herself. I say nothing of Kate's troubles
'—but you recollect her propensity? She falls into, or out of,
'every coach or boat we enter; scrapes the skin off her legs;
'brings great sores and swellings on her feet; chips large frag-
'ments out of her ankle-bones; and makes herself blue with
'bruises. She really has, however, since we got over the first
'trial of being among circumstances so new and so fatiguing, Mrs. Dickens as a traveller.
'made a *most admirable* traveller in every respect. She has
'never screamed or expressed alarm under circumstances that
'would have fully justified her in doing so, even in my eyes; has
'never given way to despondency or fatigue, though we have now
'been travelling incessantly, through a very rough country, for
'more than a month, and have been at times, as you may readily
'suppose, most thoroughly tired; has always accommodated her-
'self, well and cheerfully, to everything; and has pleased me very
'much, and proved herself perfectly game.

'We remained at Cincinnati, all Tuesday the nineteenth, and From Cincinnati to Columbus.
'all that night. At eight o'clock on Wednesday morning the

Sandusky: 1842.

'twentieth, we left in the mail stage for Columbus: Anne, Kate, 'and Mr. Q inside; I on the box. The distance is a hundred and 'twenty miles; the road macadamized; and for an American 'road, very good. We were three and twenty hours performing 'the journey. We travelled all night; reached Columbus at 'seven in the morning; breakfasted; and went to bed until

A levee at Columbus.

'dinner time. At night we held a levee for half an hour, and the 'people poured in as they always do: each gentleman with a lady 'on each arm, exactly like the Chorus to God Save the Queen. 'I wish you could see them, that you might know what a splendid 'comparison this is. They wear their clothes, precisely as the 'chorus people do; and stand—supposing Kate and me to be in 'the centre of the stage, with our backs to the footlights—just as 'the company would, on the first night of the season. They shake

What a levee was like.

'hands exactly after the manner of the guests at a ball at the 'Adelphi or the Haymarket; receive any facetiousness on my 'part, as if there were a stage direction "all laugh;" and have 'rather more difficulty in "getting off" than the last gentlemen, 'in white pantaloons, polished boots, and berlins, usually display, 'under the most trying circumstances.

From Columbus to Sandusky.

'Next morning, that is to say on Friday the 22nd at seven 'o'clock exactly, we resumed our journey. The stage from 'Columbus to this place only running thrice a week, and not on 'that day, I bargained for an "exclusive extra" with four horses, 'for which I paid forty dollars, or eight pounds English: the 'horses changing, as they would if it were the regular stage. To 'ensure our getting on properly, the proprietors sent an agent on 'the box; and, with no other company but him and a hamper full 'of eatables and drinkables, we went upon our way. It is impos-

A corduroy road.

'sible to convey an adequate idea to you of the kind of road over 'which we travelled. I can only say that it was, at the best, but 'a track through the wild forest, and among the swamps, bogs, 'and morasses of the withered bush. A great portion of it was 'what is called a "corduroy road:" which is made by throwing 'round logs or whole trees into a swamp, and leaving them to 'settle there. Good Heaven! if you only felt one of the least of 'the jolts with which the coach falls from log to log! It is like

'nothing but going up a steep flight of stairs in an omnibus. SANDUSKY: 1842.
'Now the coach flung us in a heap on its floor, and now crushed
'our heads against its roof. Now one side of it was deep in the From log to log.
'mire, and we were holding on to the other. Now it was lying on
'the horses' tails, and now again upon its own back. But it never,
'never, was in any position, attitude, or kind of motion to which
'we are accustomed in coaches; or made the smallest approach
'to our experience of the proceedings of any sort of vehicle that
'goes on wheels. Still, the day was beautiful, the air delicious,
'and we were *alone*: with no tobacco spittle, or eternal prosy The travellers left to themselves.
'conversation about dollars and politics (the only two subjects
'they ever converse about, or can converse upon) to bore us.
'We really enjoyed it; made a joke of the being knocked about;
'and were quite merry. At two o'clock we stopped in the wood
'to open our hamper and dine; and we drank to our darlings and
'all friends at home. Then we started again and went on until
'ten o'clock at night: when we reached a place called Lower
'Sandusky, sixty-two miles from our starting point. The last
'three hours of the journey were not very pleasant, for it lightened
'—awfully: every flash very vivid, very blue, and very long: and,
'the wood being so dense that the branches on *either* side of the
'track rattled and broke *against* the coach, it was rather a
'dangerous neighbourhood for a thunder storm.

'The inn at which we halted was a rough log-house. The A log-house inn.
'people were all abed, and we had to knock them up. We had
'the queerest sleeping room, with two doors, one opposite the
'other; both opening directly on the wild black country, and
'neither having any lock or bolt. The effect of these opposite
'doors was, that one was always blowing the other open: an
'ingenuity in the art of building, which I don't remember to have
'met with before. You should have seen me, in my shirt, Making tidy and safe.
'blockading them with portmanteaus, and desperately endeavour-
'ing to make the room tidy! But the blockading was really
'needful, for in my dressing case I have about 250*l.* in gold; and
'for the amount of the middle figure in that scarce metal, there
'are not a few men in the West who would murder their fathers.
'Apropos of this golden store, consider at your leisure the strange

Sandusky: 1842.

A monetary crisis.

'state of things in this country. It has no money; really *no* 'money. The bank paper won't pass; the newspapers are full 'of advertisements from tradesmen who sell by barter; and 'American gold is not to be had, or purchased. I bought sove- 'reigns, English sovereigns, at first: but as I could get none of 'them at Cincinnati to this day, I have had to purchase French 'gold; 20-franc pieces; with which I am travelling as if I were 'in Paris!

'But let's go back to Lower Sandusky. Mr. Q went to bed up 'in the roof of the log-house somewhere, but was so beset by bugs 'that he got up after an hour and *lay in the coach* . . . . . where 'he was obliged to wait till breakfast time. We breakfasted, 'driver and all, in the one common room. It was papered with 'newspapers, and was as rough a place as need be. At half past 'seven we started again, and we reached Sandusky at six o'clock 'yesterday afternoon. It is on Lake Erie, twenty-four hours' 'journey by steam boat from Buffalo. We found no boat here, nor 'has there been one, since. We are waiting, with every thing 'packed up, ready to start on the shortest notice; and are 'anxiously looking out for smoke in the distance.

Breakfast at the inn.

'There was an old gentleman in the Log inn at Lower San- 'dusky who treats with the Indians on the part of the American 'government, and has just concluded a treaty with the Wyandot 'Indians at that place to remove next year to some land provided 'for them west of the Mississippi: a little way beyond St. Louis. 'He described his negotiation to me, and their reluctance to go, 'exceedingly well. They are a fine people, but degraded and 'broken down. If you could see any of their men and women 'on a race-course in England, you would not know them from 'gipsies.

Indians.

'We are in a small house here, but a very comfortable one, and 'the people are exceedingly obliging. Their demeanour in these 'country parts is invariably morose, sullen, clownish, and repul- 'sive. I should think there is not, on the face of the earth, a 'people so entirely destitute of humour, vivacity, or the capacity 'of enjoyment. It is most remarkable. I am quite serious when 'I say that I have not heard a hearty laugh these six weeks

Western Americans deficient in humour.

'except my own; nor have I seen a merry face on any shoulders 'but a black man's. Lounging listlessly about, idling in bar- 'rooms; smoking; spitting; and lolling on the pavement in 'rocking-chairs, outside the shop doors; are the only recreations. 'I don't think the national shrewdness extends beyond the 'Yankees; that is, the Eastern men. The rest are heavy, dull, 'and ignorant. Our landlord here is from the East. He is a 'handsome, obliging, civil fellow. He comes into the room with 'his hat on; spits in the fire place as he talks; sits down on the 'sofa with his hat on; pulls out his newspaper, and reads; but 'to all this I am accustomed. He is anxious to please—and that 'is enough.

NIAGARA FALLS: 1842.

The only recreations.

A landlord

'We are wishing very much for a boat; for we hope to find our 'letters at Buffalo. It is half past one; and as there is no boat 'in sight, we are fain (sorely against our wills) to order an early 'dinner.

'*Tuesday, April Twenty-sixth*, 1842.

'NIAGARA FALLS! ! ! (UPON THE ENGLISH * SIDE).

'I don't know at what length I might have written you from 'Sandusky, my beloved friend, if a steamer had not come in sight 'just as I finished the last unintelligible sheet (oh! the ink in 'these parts!): whereupon I was obliged to pack up bag and 'baggage, to swallow a hasty apology for a dinner, and to hurry 'my train on board with all the speed I might. She was a fine 'steamship, four hundred tons burden, name the Constitution, 'had very few passengers on board, and had bountiful and hand- 'some accommodation. It's all very fine talking about Lake 'Erie, but it won't do for persons who are liable to sea-sickness. 'We were all sick. It's almost as bad in that respect as the 'Atlantic. The waves are very short, and horribly constant. We 'reached Buffalo at six this morning; went ashore to breakfast; 'sent to the post-office forthwith; and received—oh! who or what 'can say with how much pleasure and what unspeakable delight! '—our English letters!

From Sandusky to Buffalo.

On Lake Erie.

'We lay all Sunday night, at a town (and a beautiful town too)

* Ten dashes underneath English.

NIAGARA FALLS: 1842.

'called Cleveland; on Lake Erie. The people poured on board,
'in crowds, by six on Monday morning, to see me; and a party
'of "gentlemen" actually planted themselves before our little
Gazed at. 'cabin, and stared in at the door and windows *while I was*
'washing, and Kate lay in bed. I was so incensed at this, and at
'a certain newspaper published in that town which I had acci-
'dentally seen in Sandusky (advocating war with England to the
'death, saying that Britain must be "whipped again," and pro-
'mising all true Americans that within two years they should sing
'Yankee-doodle in Hyde-park and Hail Columbia in the courts
'of Westminster), that when the mayor came on board to present
Non-reception and consolement of a mayor. 'himself to me, according to custom, I refused to see him, and
'bade Mr. Q tell him why and wherefore. His honour took it
'very coolly, and retired to the top of the wharf, with a big
'stick and a whittling knife, with which he worked so lustily
'(staring at the closed door of our cabin all the time) that long
'before the boat left the big stick was no bigger than a cribbage
'peg!

From Buffalo to Niagara. 'I never in my life was in such a state of excitement as coming
'from Buffalo here, this morning. You come by railroad; and
'are nigh two hours upon the way. I looked out for the spray,
'and listened for the roar, as far beyond the bounds of possibility,
'as though, landing in Liverpool, I were to listen for the music of
'your pleasant voice in Lincoln's-inn-fields. At last, when the
Nearing the Falls. 'train stopped, I saw two great white clouds rising up from the
'depths of the earth—nothing more. They rose up slowly, gently,
'majestically, into the air. I dragged Kate down a deep and
'slippery path leading to the ferry boat; bullied Anne for not
'coming fast enough; perspired at every pore; and felt, it is im-
'possible to say how, as the sound grew louder and louder in my
'ears, and yet nothing could be seen for the mist.

'There were two English officers with us (ah! what *gentlemen*,
'what noblemen of nature they seemed), and they hurried off
'with me; leaving Kate and Anne on a crag of ice; and clam-
'bered after me over the rocks at the foot of the small Fall, while
Nearer still. 'the ferryman was getting the boat ready. I was not disap-
'pointed—but I could make out nothing. In an instant, I was

'blinded by the spray, and wet to the skin. I saw the water 'tearing madly down from some immense height, but could get 'no idea of shape, or situation, or anything but vague immensity. 'But when we were seated in the boat, and crossing at the very 'foot of the cataract—then I began to feel what it was. Directly 'I had changed my clothes at the inn I went out again, taking 'Kate with me; and hurried to the Horse-shoe-fall. I went down 'alone, into the very basin. It would be hard for a man to stand 'nearer God than he does there. There was a bright rainbow at 'my feet; and from that I looked up to—great Heaven! to *what* 'a fall of bright green water! The broad, deep, mighty stream 'seems to die in the act of falling; and, from its unfathom- 'able grave, arises that tremendous ghost of spray and mist 'which is never laid, and has been haunting this place with 'the same dread solemnity—perhaps from the creation of the 'world.

NIAGARA FALLS: 1842.

Horse-shoe-fall.

A fancy

'We purpose remaining here a week. In my next, I will try 'to give you some idea of my impressions, and to tell you how 'they change with every day. At present it is impossible. I can 'only say that the first effect of this tremendous spectacle on me, 'was peace of mind—tranquillity—great thoughts of eternal rest 'and happiness—nothing of terror. I can shudder at the recol- 'lection of Glencoe (dear friend, with Heaven's leave we must see 'Glencoe together), but whenever I think of Niagara, I shall 'think of its beauty.

Effect upon him of Niagara.

'If you could hear the roar that is in my ears as I write this. 'Both Falls are under our windows. From our sitting-room and 'bed-room we look down straight upon them. There is not a 'soul in the house but ourselves. What would I give if you and 'Mac were here, to share the sensations of this time! I was 'going to add, what would I give if the dear girl whose ashes lie 'in Kensal-green, had lived to come so far along with us—but she 'has been here many times, I doubt not, since her sweet face 'faded from my earthly sight.

The old recollection.

'One word on the precious letters before I close. You are 'right, my dear fellow, about the papers; and you are right (I

NIAGARA FALLS: 1842.

'grieve to say) about the people. *Am I right?* quoth the con-
'juror. *Yes!* from gallery, pit, and boxes. I *did* let out those
'things, at first, against my will, but when I come to tell you all
'—well; only wait—only wait—till the end of July. I say no
'more.

'I do perceive a perplexingly divided and subdivided duty, in
'the matter of the book of travels. Oh! the sublimated essence
'of comicality that I *could* distil, from the materials I have! . . .
'You are a part, and an essential part, of our home, dear friend,
'and I exhaust my imagination in picturing the circumstances
Looking forward.
'under which I shall surprise you by walking into 58, Lincoln's-inn
'fields. We are truly grateful to God for the health and happi-
'ness of our inexpressibly dear children and all our friends. But
'one letter more—only one. . . . I don't seem to have been
'half affectionate enough, but there *are* thoughts, you know, that
'lie too deep for words.'

VII.

NIAGARA AND MONTREAL.

1842.

Last two letters.

MY friend was better than his word, and two more letters reached me before his return. The opening of the first was written from Niagara on the third, and its close from Montreal on the twelfth, of May; from which latter city also, on the 26th of that month, the last of all was written.

Dickens vanquished.

Much of the first of these letters had reference to the international copyright agitation, and gave strong expression to the indignation awakened in him (nor less in some of the best men of America) by the adoption, at a public meeting in Boston itself, of a memorial against any change of the law, in the course of which it was stated, that, if English authors were invested with control over the republication of their own books, it would be no longer possible for American editors *to alter and adapt them to the*

*American taste.** This deliberate declaration however, unsparing as Dickens's anger at it was, in effect vanquished him. He saw the hopelessness of persevering in any present effort to bring about the change desired; and he took the determination, not only to drop any allusion to it in his proposed book, but to try what effect might be produced, when he should again be in England, by a league of English authors to suspend further intercourse with American publishers while the law should remain as it is. On his return he made accordingly a public appeal to this effect, stating his own intention for the future to forego all profit derivable from the authorized transmission of early proofs across the Atlantic; but his hopes in this particular also were doomed to disappointment. I now leave the subject, quoting only from his present letter the general remarks with which it is dismissed by himself.

NIAGARA FALLS: 1842.

'NIAGARA FALLS.

'*Tuesday, Third May*, 1842.

'I'll tell you what the two obstacles to the passing of an inter- 'national copyright law with England, are: firstly, the national 'love of "doing" a man in any bargain or matter of business; 'secondly, the national vanity. Both these characteristics prevail 'to an extent which no stranger can possibly estimate.

Two obstacles to international copyright.

'With regard to the first, I seriously believe that it is an 'essential part of the pleasure derived from the perusal of a 'popular English book, that the author gets nothing for it. It is 'so dar-nation 'cute—so knowing in Jonathan to get his reading 'on those terms. He has the Englishman so regularly on the hip 'that his eye twinkles with slyness, cunning, and delight; and he 'chuckles over the humour of the page with an appreciation of it, 'quite inconsistent with, and apart from, its honest purchase. 'The raven hasn't more joy in eating a stolen piece of meat, than 'the American has in reading the English book which he gets for 'nothing.

The first.

'With regard to the second, it reconciles that better and more

* There has been, even since the completion of this biography, a remarkable illustration of the value which the most respectable American publishers continue to set upon this privilege, and of the uses to which they do not scruple to apply it (1875).

NIAGARA FALLS: 1842.

'elevated class who are above this sort of satisfaction, with sur-
'prising ease. The man's read in America! The Americans
'like him! They are glad to see him when he comes here!
'They flock about him, and tell him that they are grateful to him
The second. 'for spirits in sickness; for many hours of delight in health; for
'a hundred fanciful associations which are constantly interchanged
'between themselves and their wives and children at home! It
'is nothing that all this takes places in countries where he is
'*paid:* it is nothing that he has won fame for himself elsewhere,
'and profit too. The Americans read him; the free, enlightened,
'independent Americans; and what more *would* he have? Here's
'reward enough for any man. The national vanity swallows up
'all other countries on the face of the earth, and leaves but this
'above the ocean. Now, mark what the real value of this
Value of literary popularity in America. 'American reading is. Find me in the whole range of literature
'one single solitary English book which becomes popular with
'them, before it has forced itself on their attention by going
'through the ordeal at home and becoming popular there—and I
'am content that the law should remain as it is, for ever and a day.
'I must make one exception. There *are* some mawkish tales of
'fashionable life before which crowds fall down as they were
'gilded calves, which at home have been snugly enshrined in
'circulating libraries from the date of their publication.

'As to telling them they will have no literature of their own,
'the universal answer (out of Boston) is, "We don't want one.
'"Why should we pay for one when we can get it for nothing?
A substitute for literature. '"Our people don't think of poetry, sir. Dollars, banks, and
'"cotton are *our* books, sir." And they certainly are in one
'sense; for a lower average of general information than exists in
'this country on all other topics, it would be very hard to find.
'So much, at present, for international copyright.'

The same letter kept the promise made in its predecessor that one or two more sketches of character should be sent. 'One of
'the most amusing phrases in use all through the country, for its
'Yes, sir. 'constant repetition, and adaptation to every emergency, is "Yes,
'"Sir." Let me give you a specimen.' (The specimen was the dialogue, in the *Notes*, of straw-hat and brown-hat, during the

stage-coach ride to Sandusky.) 'I am not joking, upon my word. 'This is exactly the dialogue. Nothing else occurring to me at 'this moment, let me give you the secretary's portrait. Shall I? NIAGARA FALLS: 1842.

'He is of a sentimental turn—strongly sentimental; and tells 'Anne as June approaches that he hopes "we shall sometimes '"think of him" in our own country. He wears a cloak, like 'Hamlet; and a very tall, big, limp, dusty black hat, which he 'exchanges on long journeys for a cap like Harlequin's. . . . He 'sings; and in some of our quarters, when his bedroom has been 'near ours, we have heard him grunting bass notes through the 'keyhole of his door, to attract our attention. His desire that I 'should formally ask him to sing, and his devices to make me do 'so, are irresistibly absurd. There was a piano in our room at 'Hartford (you recollect our being there, early in February?)— 'and he asked me one night, when we were alone, if "Mrs. D" 'played. "Yes, Mr. Q." "Oh indeed Sir! *I* sing: so when- '"ever you want *a little soothing*—" You may imagine how 'hastily I left the room, on some false pretence, without hearing 'more. The secretary. Frightful suggestion.

'He paints. . . An enormous box of oil colours is the main 'part of his luggage: and with these he blazes away, in his own 'room, for hours together. Anne got hold of some big-headed 'pot-bellied sketches he made of the passengers on board the 'canal-boat (including me in my fur-coat), the recollection of 'which brings the tears into my eyes at this minute. He painted 'the Falls, at Niagara, superbly; and is supposed now to be 'engaged on a full-length representation of me: waiters having 'reported that chamber-maids have said that there is a picture in 'his room which has a great deal of hair. One girl opined that it 'was "the beginning of the King's-arms;" but I am pretty sure 'the Lion is myself. . . . Paintings from life.

'Sometimes, but not often, he commences a conversation. 'That usually occurs when we are walking the deck after dark; 'or when we are alone together in a coach. It is his practice at 'such times to relate the most notorious and patriarchal Joe 'Miller, as something that occurred in his own family. When 'travelling by coach, he is particularly fond of imitating cows and

Niagara Falls: 1842.

'pigs; and nearly challenged a fellow passenger the other day, 'who had been moved by the display of this accomplishment into 'telling him that he was "a perfect calf." He thinks it an 'indispensable act of politeness and attention to enquire con- 'stantly whether we're not sleepy, or, to use his own words, 'whether we don't "suffer for sleep." If we have taken a long 'nap of fourteen hours or so, after a long journey, he is sure to 'meet me at the bedroom door when I turn out in the morning, 'with this enquiry. But apart from the amusement he gives us, I 'could not by possibility have lighted on any one who would have 'suited my purpose so well. I have raised his ten dollars per 'month to twenty; and mean to make it up for six months.'

Good-natured foibles.

The conclusion of this letter was dated from 'Montreal, 'Thursday, twelfth May;' and was little more than an eager yearning for home. 'This will be a very short and stupid letter, 'my dear friend; for the post leaves here much earlier than I 'expected, and all my grand designs for being unusually brilliant 'fall to the ground. I will write you *one line* by the next Cunard 'boat—reserving all else until our happy and long long looked-for 'meeting.

Toryism of Toronto.

'We have been to Toronto, and Kingston; experiencing 'attentions at each which I should have difficulty in describing. 'The wild and rabid toryism of Toronto, is, I speak seriously, '*appalling*. English kindness is very different from American. 'People send their horses and carriages for your use, but they 'don't exact as payment the right of being always under your 'nose. We had no less than *five* carriages at Kingston waiting 'our pleasure at one time; not to mention the commodore's barge 'and crew, and a beautiful government steamer. We dined with 'Sir Charles Bagot last Sunday. Lord Mulgrave was to have met 'us yesterday at Lachine; but as he was wind-bound in his yacht

Canadian attentions.

'and couldn't get in, Sir Richard Jackson sent his drag four-in- 'hand, with two other young fellows who are also his aides, and 'in we came in grand style.

'The Theatricals (I think I told you* I had been invited to

* See *ante*, 208.

'play with the officers of the Coldstream guards here) are, *A* MONTREAL: 1842.
'*Roland for an Oliver; Two o'clock in the Morning;* and either
'the *Young Widow*, or *Deaf as a Post.* Ladies (unprofessional)
'are going to play, for the first time. I wrote to Mitchell at New
'York for a wig for Mr. Snobbington, which has arrived, and is
'brilliant. If they had done *Love, Law and Physick*, as at first Proposed private theatricals.
'proposed, I was already "up" in Flexible, having played it of
'old, before my authorship days; but if it should be Splash in the
'*Young Widow*, you will have to do me the favor to imagine me
'in a smart livery-coat, shiny black hat and cockade, white knee-
'cords, white top-boots, blue stock, small whip, red cheeks and
'dark eyebrows. Conceive Topping's state of mind if I bring this
'dress home and put it on unexpectedly! . . . God bless you,
'dear friend. I can say nothing about the seventh, the day on
'which we sail. It is impossible. Words cannot express what
'we feel now that the time is so near. . . . .'

His last letter, dated from 'Peasco's Hotel, Montreal, Canada, 'twenty-sixth of May,' described the private theatricals, and enclosed me a bill of the play.

'This, like my last, will be a stupid letter, because both Kate Last letter.
'and I are thrown into such a state of excitement by the near
'approach of the seventh of June, that we can do nothing, and
'think of nothing.

'The play came off last night. The audience, between five and
'six hundred strong, were invited as to a party; a regular
'table with refreshments being spread in the lobby and saloon.
'We had the band of the twenty-third (one of the finest in the The private play.
'service) in the orchestra, the theatre was lighted with gas, the
'scenery was excellent, and the properties were all brought from
'private houses. Sir Charles Bagot, Sir Richard Jackson, and
'their staffs were present; and as the military portion of the
'audience were all in full uniform, it was really a splendid
'scene.

'We "went" also splendidly; though with nothing very re-
'markable in the acting way. We had for Sir Mark Chase a
'genuine odd fish, with plenty of humour; but our Tristram
'Sappy was not up to the marvellous reputation he has somehow

Montreal: 1842.

'or other acquired here. I am not however, let me tell you, 'placarded as a stage-manager for nothing. Everybody was told 'they would have to submit to the most iron despotism; and didn't 'I come Macready over them? Oh no. By no means. Certainly 'not. The pains I have taken with them, and the perspiration I 'have expended, during the last ten days, exceed in amount

Stage manager's report.

'anything you can imagine. I had regular plots of the scenery 'made out, and lists of the properties wanted; and had them 'nailed up by the prompter's chair. Every letter that was to be 'delivered, was written; every piece of money that had to be 'given, provided; and not a single thing lost sight of. I prompted, 'myself, when I was not on; when I was, I made the regular 'prompter of the theatre my deputy; and I never saw anything 'so perfectly touch and go, as the first two pieces. The bed-'room scene in the interlude was as well furnished as Vestris had 'it; with a "practicable" fireplace blazing away like mad, and 'everything in a concatenation accordingly. I really do believe 'that I was very funny: at least I know that I laughed heartily

Mr. Snobbington.

'at myself, and made the part a character, such as you and I 'know very well: a mixture of T——, Harley, Yates, Keeley, 'and Jerry Sneak. It went with a roar, all through; and, as I 'am closing this, they have told me I was so well made up that 'Sir Charles Bagot, who sat in the stage-box, had no idea who 'played Mr. Snobbington, until the piece was over.

The lady performers.

'But only think of Kate playing! and playing devilish well, I 'assure you! All the ladies were capital, and we had no wait or 'hitch for an instant. You may suppose this, when I tell you 'that we began at eight, and had the curtain down at eleven. It 'is their custom here, to prevent heartburnings in a very heart-'burning town, whenever they have played in private, to repeat 'the performances in public. So, on Saturday (substituting, of 'course, real actresses for the ladies), we repeat the two first 'pieces to a paying audience, for the manager's benefit. . . .

'I send you a bill, to which I have appended a key.

Private Theatricals.

COMMITTEE.

Mrs. TORRENS. | Mrs. PERRY.
W. C. ERMATINGER, Esq. | Captain TORRENS.
THE EARL OF MULGRAVE.

STAGE MANAGER--MR. CHARLES DICKENS.

QUEEN'S THEATRE, MONTREAL.

ON WEDNESDAY EVENING, MAY 25TH, 1842,
WILL BE PERFORMED,

A ROLAND FOR AN OLIVER.

MRS. SELBORNE. ——— Mrs Torrens
MARIA DARLINGTON. ——— Miss Griffin
MRS. FIXTURE. ——— Miss Ermatinger.

MR. SELBORNE. ——— Lord Mulgrave.
ALFRED HIGHFLYER. ——— Mr. Charles Dickens
SIR MARK CHASE. ——— Honorable Mr. Matthews
FIXTURE. ——— Captain Willoughby.
GAMEKEEPER. ——— Captain Granville

AFTER WHICH, AN INTERLUDE IN ONE SCENE, (FROM THE FRENCH,) CALLED

Past Two o'Clock in the Morning.

THE STRANGER. ——— Captain Granville
MR. SNOBBINGTON. ——— Mr. Charles Dickens

TO CONCLUDE WITH THE FARCE, IN ONE ACT, ENTITLED

DEAF AS A POST.

MRS. PLUMPLEY. — Mrs Torrens
AMY TEMPLETON. — Mrs Charles Dickens!!!!!!!!
SOPHY WALTON. — Mrs Perry.
SALLY MAGGS. — Miss Griffin

CAPTAIN TEMPLETON. — Captain Torrens
MR. WALTON. — Captain Willoughby.
TRISTRAM SAPPY. — Doctor Griffin
CRUPPER. — Lord Mulgrave
GALLOP. — Mr. Charles Dickens.

MONTREAL, May 24, 1842. GAZETTE OFFICE.

Montreal: 1842.

A touch of Crummles.

'I have not told you half enough. But I promise you I shall 'make you shake your sides about this play. Wasn't it worthy 'of Crummles that when Lord Mulgrave and I went out to the 'door to receive the Governor-general, the regular prompter 'followed us in agony with four tall candlesticks with wax candles 'in them, and besought us with a bleeding heart to carry two 'apiece, in accordance with all the precedents? . . .

'I have hardly spoken of our letters, which reached us yesterday, 'shortly before the play began. A hundred thousand thanks for 'your delightful mainsail of that gallant little packet. I read it 'again and again; and had it all over again at breakfast time this 'morning. I heard also, by the same ship, from Talfourd, Miss 'Coutts, Brougham, Rogers, and others. A delicious letter from 'Mac too, as good as his painting I swear. Give my hearty love 'to him. . . . God bless you, my dear friend. As the time 'draws nearer, we get FEVERED with anxiety for home. . . . 'Kiss our darlings for us. We shall soon meet, please God, 'and be happier and merrier than ever we were, in all our lives.

Last words from America.

'. . . Oh home — home — home — home — home — home — 'HOME!!!!!!!!!!!'

VIII.

AMERICAN NOTES.

1842.

London 1842.

Return from America.

THE reality did not fall short of the anticipation of home. His return was the occasion of unbounded enjoyment; and what he had planned before sailing as the way we should meet, received literal fulfilment. By the sound of his cheery voice I first knew that he was come; and from my house we went together to Maclise, also 'without a moment's warning.' A Greenwich dinner in which several friends (Talfourd, Milnes, Procter, Maclise, Stanfield, Marryat, Barham, Hood, and Cruik-

shank among them) took part, and other immediate greetings, followed; but the most special celebration was reserved for autumn, when, by way of challenge to what he had seen while abroad, a home-journey was arranged with Stanfield, Maclise, and myself for his companions, into such of the most striking scenes of a picturesque English county as the majority of us might not before have visited: Cornwall being ultimately chosen. LONDON: 1842.

Before our departure he was occupied by his preparation of the *American Notes;* and to the same interval belongs the arrival in London of Mr. Longfellow, who became his guest, and (for both of us I am privileged to add) our attached friend. Longfellow's name was not then the familiar word it has since been in England; but he had already written several of his most felicitous pieces, and he possessed all the qualities of delightful companionship, the culture and the charm, which have no higher type than the accomplished and genial American. He reminded me, when lately again in England, of two experiences out of many we had enjoyed together this quarter of a century before. One of them was a day at Rochester, when, met by one of those prohibitions which are the wonder of visitors and the shame of Englishmen, we overleapt gates and barriers, and, setting at defiance repeated threats of all the terrors of law coarsely expressed to us by the custodian of the place, explored minutely the castle ruins. The other was a night among those portions of the population which outrage law and defy its terrors all the days of their lives, the tramps and thieves of London; when, under guidance and protection of the most trusted officers of the two great metropolitan prisons afforded to us by Mr. Chesterton and Lieut. Tracey, we went over the worst haunts of the most dangerous classes. Nor will it be unworthy of remark, in proof that attention is not drawn vainly to such scenes, that, upon Dickens going over them a dozen years later when he wrote a paper about them for his *Household Words*, he found important changes effected whereby these human dens, if not less dangerous, were become certainly more decent. On the night of our earlier visit, Maclise, who accompanied us, was struck with such sickness on entering the first of the Mint lodging-houses in the borough, that he had to

Longfellow in England.

At Rochester Castle.

Among London tramps and thieves.

Thirty years ago.

LONDON: 1842.

remain, for the time we were in them, under guardianship of the police outside. Longfellow returned home by the Great Western from Bristol on the 21st of October, enjoying as he passed through Bath the hospitality of Landor; and at the end of the following week we started on our Cornish travel.

AT BROADSTAIRS.

But what before this had occupied Dickens in the writing way must now be told. Not long after his reappearance amongst us, his house being still in the occupation of Sir John Wilson, he went to Broadstairs, taking with him the letters from which I have quoted so largely to help him in preparing his *American Notes;* and one of his first announcements to me (18th of July) shows not only this labour in progress, but the story he was under engagement to begin in November working in his mind. 'The 'subjects at the beginning of the book are of that kind that I 'can't *dash* at them, and now and then they fret me in con- 'sequence. When I come to Washington, I am all right. The

Preparing *Notes.*

'solitary prison at Philadelphia is a good subject, though; I 'forgot that for the moment. Have you seen the Boston chapter 'yet? . . . I have never been in Cornwall either. A mine 'certainly; and a letter for that purpose shall be got from South- 'wood Smith. I have some notion of opening the new book in 'the lantern of a lighthouse!' A letter a couple of months later (16th of Sept.) recurs to that proposed opening of his story which after all he laid aside; and shows how rapidly he was getting his *American Notes* into shape. 'At the Isle of Thanet races yester- 'day I saw—oh! who shall say what an immense amount of 'character in the way of inconceivable villainy and blackguardism! 'I even got some new wrinkles in the way of showmen, conjurors,

Fancy for the opening of *Chuzzlewit.*

'pea-and-thimblers, and trampers generally. I think of opening 'my new book on the coast of Cornwall, in some terribly dreary 'iron-bound spot. I hope to have finished the American book 'before the end of next month; and we will then together fly 'down into that desolate region.' Our friends having Academy engagements to detain them, we had to delay a little; and I meanwhile turn back to his letters to observe his progress with his *Notes,* and other employments or enjoyments of the interval. They require no illustration that they will not themselves supply:

but I may remark that the then collected *Poems* of Tennyson had become very favourite reading with him; and that while in America Mr. Mitchell the comedian had given him a small white shaggy terrier, who bore at first the imposing name of Timber Doodle, and became a domestic pet and companion. BROADSTAIRS: 1842. A domestic friend.

'I have been reading' (7th of August) 'Tennyson all this morning 'on the seashore. Among other trifling effects, the waters have 'dried up as they did of old, and shown me all the mermen and 'mermaids, at the bottom of the ocean; together with millions of 'queer creatures, half-fish and half-fungus, looking down into all 'manner of coral caves and seaweed conservatories; and staring 'in with their great dull eyes at every open nook and loophole. 'Who else, too, could conjure up such a close to the extra-'ordinary and as Landor would say "most woonderful" series of 'pictures in the "dream of fair women," as— Reading Tennyson.

'Squadrons and squares of men in brazen plates,
'Scaffolds, still sheets of water, divers woes,
'Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron grates,
'And hushed seraglios!

'I am getting on pretty well, but it was so glittering and sunshiny 'yesterday that I was forced to make holiday.' Four days later: 'I have not written a word this blessed day. I got to New York 'yesterday, and think it goes as it should. . . . Little doggy 'improves rapidly, and now jumps over my stick at the word of 'command. I have changed his name to Snittle Timbery, as 'more sonorous and expressive. He unites with the rest of the 'family in cordial regards and loves. *Nota Bene.* The Margate 'theatre is open every evening, and the Four Patagonians '(see Goldsmith's *Essays*) are performing thrice a week at 'Ranelagh. . . .' Little doggy. Attractions at Margate.

A visit from me was at this time due, to which these were held out as inducements; and there followed what it was supposed I could not resist, a transformation into the broadest farce of a deep tragedy by a dear friend of ours. 'Now you really must come. 'Seeing only is believing, very often isn't that, and even Being 'the thing falls a long way short of believing it. Mrs. Nickleby Being, not always Believing.

Broadstairs: 1842.

'herself once asked me, as you know, if I really believed there 'ever was such a woman; but there'll be no more belief, either in 'me or my descriptions, after what I have to tell of our excellent 'friend's tragedy, if you don't come and have it played again for 'yourself "by particular desire." We saw it last night, and oh! 'if you had but been with us! Young Betty, doing what the 'mind of man without my help never *can* conceive, with his legs 'like padded boot-trees wrapped up in faded yellow drawers, was 'the hero. The comic man of the company enveloped in a 'white sheet, with his head tied with red tape like a brief and 'greeted with yells of laughter whenever he appeared, was the 'venerable priest. A poor toothless old idiot at whom the very 'gallery roared with contempt when he was called a tyrant, was 'the remorseless and aged Creon. And Ismene being arrayed in 'spangled muslin trowsers very loose in the legs and very tight in 'the ankles such as Fatima would wear in *Blue Beard*, was at her 'appearance immediately called upon for a song. After this can 'you longer . . .?'

'Athenian Captive' burlesqued.

With the opening of September I had renewed report of his book, and of other matters. 'The Philadelphia chapter I think 'very good, but I am sorry to say it has not made as much in 'print as I hoped . . . In America they have forged a letter 'with my signature, which they coolly declare appeared in the '*Chronicle* with the copyright circular; and in which I express 'myself in such terms as you may imagine, in reference to the 'dinners and so forth. It has been widely distributed all over 'the States; and the felon who invented it is a "smart man" of 'course. You are to understand that it is not done as a joke, 'and is scurrilously reviewed. Mr. Park Benjamin begins a 'lucubration upon it with these capitals, Dickens is a Fool, 'and a Liar. . . . . I have a new protégé, in the person of a 'wretched deaf and dumb boy whom I found upon the sands the 'other day, half dead, and have got (for the present) into the 'union infirmary at Minster. A most deplorable case.'

Smart man and forged letter.

A new protégé.

On the 14th he told me: 'I have pleased myself very much 'to-day in the matter of Niagara. I have made the description 'very brief (as it should be), but I fancy it is good. I am be-

'ginning to think over the introductory chapter, and it has meanwhile occurred to me that I should like, at the beginning of the volumes, to put what follows on a blank page. *I dedicate this Book to those friends of mine in America, who, loving their country, can bear the truth, when it is written good humouredly and in a kind spirit.* What do you think? Do you see any objection?' My reply is to be inferred from what he sent back on the 20th. 'I don't quite see my way towards an expression in the dedication of any feeling in reference to the American reception. Of course I have always intended to glance at it, gratefully, in the end of the book; and it will have its place in the introductory chapter, if we decide for that. Would it do to put in, after "friends in America," *who giving me a welcome I must ever gratefully and proudly remember, left my judgment free, and* who, loving, &c. If so, so be it.'

BROADSTAIRS: 1842.

Proposed Dedication.

As to American reception.

Before the end of the month he wrote: 'For the last two or three days I have been rather slack in point of work; not being in the vein. To-day I had not written twenty lines before I rushed out (the weather being gorgeous) to bathe. And when I have done that, it is all up with me in the way of authorship until to-morrow. The little dog is in the highest spirits; and jumps, as Mr. Kenwigs would say, perpetually. I have had letters by the Britannia from Felton, Prescott, Mr. Q. and others, all very earnest and kind. I think you will like what I have written on the poor emigrants and their ways as I literally and truly saw them on the boat from Quebec to Montreal.'

Sea-bathing and authorship.

This was a passage, which, besides being in itself as attractive as any in his writings, gives such perfect expression to a feeling that underlies them all that I subjoin it in a note.* On board this Canadian steamboat he encountered crowds of poor emigrants

Emigrants in Canada.

* 'Cant as we may, and as we shall to the end of all things, it is very much harder for the poor to be virtuous than it is for the rich; and the good that is in them, shines the brighter for it. In many a noble mansion lives a man, the best of husbands and of fathers, whose private worth in both capacities is justly lauded to the skies. But bring him here, upon this crowded deck. Strip from his fair young wife her silken dress and jewels, unbind her braided hair, stamp early wrinkles on her brow, pinch her pale cheek with care and much privation, array her faded form in coarsely patched attire, let there be nothing but his

Broadstairs: 1842.

and their children; and such was their patient kindness and cheerful endurance, in circumstances where the easy-living rich could hardly fail to be monsters of impatience and selfishness, that it suggested to him a reflection than which it was not possible to have written anything more worthy of observation, or more absolutely true. Jeremy Taylor has the same philosophy in his lesson on opportunities, but here it was beautified by the example with all its fine touches. It made us read Rich and Poor by new translation.

Rich and Poor by new translation.

Coming to the end.

The printers were now hard at work, and in the last week of September he wrote: 'I send you proofs as far as Niagara . . . 'I am rather holiday-making this week . . . taking principal part 'in a regatta here yesterday, very pretty and gay indeed. We 'think of coming up in time for Macready's opening, when per- 'haps you will give us a chop; and of course you and Mac will 'dine with *us* the next day? I shall leave nothing of the book to

Patient Poor and easy-living Rich.

'love to set her forth or deck her out, 'and you shall put it to the proof in- 'deed. So change his station in the 'world that he shall see, in those 'young things who climb about his 'knee, not records of his wealth and 'name, but little wrestlers with him 'for his daily bread; so many poachers 'on his scanty meal; so many units 'to divide his every sum of comfort, 'and farther to reduce its small amount. 'In lieu of the endearments of child- 'hood in its sweetest aspect, heap 'upon him all its pains and wants, its 'sicknesses and ills, its fretfulness, 'caprice, and querulous endurance: 'let its prattle be, not of engaging 'infant fancies, but of cold, and thirst, 'and hunger: and if his fatherly affec- 'tion outlive all this, and he be patient, 'watchful, tender; careful of his chil- 'dren's lives, and mindful always of 'their joys and sorrows; then send 'him back to parliament, and pulpit, 'and to quarter sessions, and when he 'hears fine talk of the depravity of 'those who live from hand to mouth, 'and labour hard to do it, let him 'speak up, as one who knows, and 'tell those holders-forth that they, by 'parallel with such a class, should be 'high angels in their daily lives, and 'lay but humble siege to heaven at 'last. . . . Which of us shall say 'what he would be, if such realities, 'with small relief or change all through 'his days, were his! Looking round 'upon these people: far from home, 'houseless, indigent, wandering, weary 'with travel and hard living: and 'seeing how patiently they nursed and 'tended their young children: how 'they consulted ever their wants first, 'then half supplied their own; what 'gentle ministers of hope and faith 'the women were; how the men pro- 'fited by their example; and how 'very, very seldom even a moment's 'petulance or harsh complaint broke 'out among them: I felt a stronger 'love and honour of my kind come 'glowing on my heart, and wished to 'God there had been many atheists 'in the better part of human nature 'there, to read this simple lesson in 'the book of life.'

'do after coming home, please God, but the two chapters on 'slavery and the people which I could manage easily in a week, 'if need were . . . The policeman who supposed the Duke of 'Brunswick to be one of the swell mob, ought instantly to be 'made an inspector. The suspicion reflects the highest credit (I 'seriously think) on his penetration and judgment.' Three days later: 'For the last two days we have had gales blowing from the 'north-east, and seas rolling on us that drown the pier. To-day it 'is tremendous. Such a sea was never known here at this season, 'and it is running in at this moment in waves of twelve feet high. 'You would hardly know the place. But we shall be punctual to 'your dinner hour on Saturday. If the wind should hold in the 'same quarter, we may be obliged to come up by land; and in 'that case I should start the caravan at six in the morning. . . . 'What do you think of this for my title—*American Notes for 'General Circulation;* and of this motto?

BROADSTAIRS: 1842.

A shrewd guess.

Heavy seas.

'In reply to a question from the Bench, the Solicitor for the Bank observed, 'that this kind of notes circulated the most extensively, in those parts of the 'world where they were stolen and forged.—*Old Bailey Report.*'

Rejected motto for *Notes.*

The motto was omitted, objection being made to it; and on the last day of the month I had the last of his letters during this Broadstairs visit. 'Strange as it may appear to you' (25th of September), 'the sea is running so high that we have no choice 'but to return by land. No steamer can come out of Ramsgate, 'and the Margate boat lay out all night on Wednesday with all 'her passengers on board. You may be sure of us therefore on 'Saturday at 5, for I have determined to leave here to-morrow, as 'we could not otherwise manage it in time; and have engaged an 'omnibus to bring the whole caravan by the overland route. . . . 'We cannot open a window, or a door; legs are of no use on the 'terrace; and the Margate boats can only take people aboard at 'Herne Bay!' He brought with him all that remained to be done of his second volume except the last two chapters, including that to which he has referred as 'introductory;' and on the following Wednesday (5th of October) he told me that the first of these was done. 'I want you very much to come and dine to-day

A gale of wind.

Broadstairs: 1842.

'that we may repair to Drury-lane together; and let us say half-'past four, or there is no time to be comfortable. I am going out 'to Tottenham this morning, on a cheerless mission I would 'willingly have avoided. Hone, of the *Every Day Book*, is dying; 'and sent Cruikshank yesterday to beg me to go and see him, as, 'having read no books but mine of late, he wanted to see and 'shake hands with me before (as George said) "he went." There 'is no help for it, of course; so to Tottenham I repair, this 'morning. I worked all day, and till midnight; and finished 'the slavery chapter yesterday.' The cheerless visit had its mournful sequel before the next month closed, when he went with the same companion to poor Hone's funeral.

Hone of the *Every Day Book*.

An introductory chapter suppressed.

On the 10th of October I heard from him that the chapter intended to be introductory to the *Notes* was written, and waiting our conference whether or not it should be printed. We decided against it; on his part so reluctantly, that I had to undertake for its publication when a more fitting time should come. This in my judgment has arrived, and the chapter first sees the light on this page. There is no danger at present, as there would have been when it was written, that its proper self-assertion should be mistaken for an apprehension of hostile judgments which he was anxious to deprecate or avoid. He is out of reach of all that now; and reveals to us here, as one whom fear or censure can touch no more, his honest purpose in the use of satire even where his humorous temptations were strongest. What he says will on other grounds also be read with unusual interest, for it will be found to connect itself impressively not with his first experiences only, but with his second visit to America at the close of his life. He held always the same high opinion of what was best in that country, and always the same contempt for what was worst in it.

'INTRODUCTORY, AND NECESSARY TO BE READ.

Chapter now first printed.

'I have placed the foregoing title at the head of this page, 'because I challenge and deny the right of any person to pass 'judgment on this book, or to arrive at any reasonable conclusion

'in reference to it, without first being at the trouble of becoming acquainted with its design and purpose. LONDON: 1842.

Suppressed chapter.

'It is not statistical. Figures of arithmetic have already been heaped upon America's devoted head, almost as lavishly as figures of speech have been piled above Shakespeare's grave.

'It comprehends no small talk concerning individuals, and no violation of the social confidences of private life. The very prevalent practice of kidnapping live ladies and gentlemen, forcing them into cabinets, and labelling and ticketing them whether they will or no, for the gratification of the idle and the curious, is not to my taste. Therefore I have avoided it.

'It has not a grain of any political ingredient in its whole composition.

Why silent as to personal reception.

'Neither does it contain, nor have I intended that it should contain, any lengthened and minute account of my personal reception in the United States: not because I am, or ever was, insensible to that spontaneous effusion of affection and generosity of heart, in a most affectionate and generous-hearted people; but because I conceive that it would ill become me to flourish matter necessarily involving so much of my own praises, in the eyes of my unhappy readers.

Notes described.

'This book is simply what it claims to be—a record of the impressions I received from day to day, during my hasty travels in America, and sometimes (but not always) of the conclusions to which they, and after-reflection on them, have led me; a description of the country I passed through; of the institutions I visited; of the kind of people among whom I journeyed; and of the manners and customs that came within my observation. Very many works having just the same scope and range, have been already published, but I think that these two volumes stand in need of no apology on that account. The interest of such productions, if they have any, lies in the varying impressions made by the same novel things on different minds; and not in new discoveries or extraordinary adventures.

Risks incurred.

'I can scarcely be supposed to be ignorant of the hazard I run in writing of America at all. I know perfectly well that there is,

London: 1842.

Suppressed chapter.

'in that country, a numerous class of well-intentioned persons 'prone to be dissatisfied with all accounts of the Republic whose 'citizens they are, which are not couched in terms of exalted and 'extravagant praise. I know perfectly well that there is in 'America, as in most other places laid down in maps of the great 'world, a numerous class of persons so tenderly and delicately 'constituted, that they cannot bear the truth in any form. And I

Native critics.

'do not need the gift of prophecy to discern afar off, that they 'who will be aptest to detect malice, ill-will, and all uncharitable-'ness in these pages, and to show, beyond any doubt, that they 'are perfectly inconsistent with that grateful and enduring recol-'lection which I profess to entertain of the welcome I found 'awaiting me beyond the Atlantic—will be certain native journa-'lists, veracious and gentlemanly, who were at great pains to prove 'to me, on all occasions during my stay there, that the aforesaid 'welcome was utterly worthless.

'But, venturing to dissent even from these high authorities, I 'formed my own opinion of its value in the outset, and retain it 'to this hour; and in asserting (as I invariably did on all public 'occasions) my liberty and freedom of speech while I was among 'the Americans, and in maintaining it at home, I believe that I 'best show my sense of the high worth of that welcome, and of 'the honourable singleness of purpose with which it was extended 'to me. From first to last I saw, in the friends who crowded 'round me in America, old readers, over-grateful and over-partial 'perhaps, to whom I had happily been the means of furnishing

Own estimate of American welcome.

'pleasure and entertainment; not a vulgar herd who would 'flatter and cajole a stranger into turning with closed eyes from 'all the blemishes of the nation, and into chaunting its praises 'with the discrimination of a street ballad-singer. From first 'to last I saw, in those hospitable hands, a home-made wreath 'of laurel; and not an iron muzzle disguised beneath a flower 'or two.

'Therefore I take—and hold myself not only justified in taking, 'but bound to take—the plain course of saying what I think, 'and noting what I saw; and as it is not my custom to exalt what 'in my judgment are foibles and abuses at home, so I have no

'intention of softening down, or glozing over, those that I have 'observed abroad. LONDON: 1842.

Suppressed chapter.

'If this book should fall into the hands of any sensitive American 'who cannot bear to be told that the working of the institutions 'of his country is far from perfect; that in spite of the advantage 'she has over all other nations in the elastic freshness and vigour 'of her youth, she is far from being a model for the earth to copy; 'and that even in those pictures of the national manners with 'which he quarrels most, there is still (after the lapse of several 'years, each of which may be fairly supposed to have had its 'stride in improvement) much that is just and true at this hour; 'let him lay it down, now, for I shall not please him. Of the 'intelligent, reflecting, and educated among his countrymen, I 'have no fear; for I have ample reason to believe, after many 'delightful conversations not easily to be forgotten, that there are 'very few topics (if any) on which their sentiments differ materially 'from mine.

Probable reception of *Notes*.

'I may be asked—"If you have been in any respect disappointed '"in America, and are assured beforehand that the expression of '"your disappointment will give offence to any class, why do you '"write at all?" My answer is, that I went there expecting 'greater things than I found, and resolved as far as in me lay to 'do justice to the country, at the expense of any (in my view) 'mistaken or prejudiced statements that might have been made 'to its disparagement. Coming home with a corrected and 'sobered judgment, I consider myself no less bound to do justice 'to what, according to my best means of judgment, I found to be 'the truth.'

Why write the book at all.

Of the book for whose opening page this matter introductory was written, it will be enough merely to add that it appeared on the 18th of October; that before the close of the year four large editions had been sold; and that in my opinion it thoroughly deserved the estimate formed of it by one connected with America by the strongest social affections, and otherwise in all respects an honourable, high-minded, upright judge. 'You have been very 'tender,' wrote Lord Jeffrey, 'to our sensitive friends beyond sea, 'and my whole heart goes along with every word you have written.

Jeffrey's opinion of it.

London: 1842.

'I think that you have perfectly accomplished all that you profess 'or undertake to do, and that the world has never yet seen a more 'faithful, graphic, amusing, kind-hearted narrative.'

I permit myself so far to anticipate a later page as to print here a brief extract from one of the letters of the last American visit. Without impairing the interest with which the narrative of that time will be read in its proper place, I shall thus indicate the extent to which present impressions were modified by the experience of twenty-six years later. He is writing from Philadelphia on the fourteenth of January, 1868.

Later page anticipated.

'I see *great changes* for the better, socially. Politically, no. 'England governed by the Marylebone vestry and the penny 'papers, and England as she would be after years of such govern- 'ing; is what I make of *that.* Socially, the change in manners is 'remarkable. There is much greater politeness and forbearance 'in all ways. . . . On the other hand there are still provincial 'oddities wonderfully quizzical; and the newspapers are con- 'stantly expressing the popular amazement at "Mr. Dickens's '"extraordinary composure." They seem to take it ill that I 'don't stagger on to the platform overpowered by the spectacle 'before me, and the national greatness. They are all so accus- 'tomed to do public things with a flourish of trumpets, that the 'notion of my coming in to read without somebody first flying up 'and delivering an "Oration" about me, and flying down again 'and leading me in, is so very unaccountable to them, that some- 'times they have no idea until I open my lips that it can possibly 'be Charles Dickens.'

Experience of America in 1868.

BOOK FOURTH.

LONDON AND GENOA.

1843—1845. ÆT. 31—33.

I. First Year of Martin Chuzzlewit.
II. Chuzzlewit Disappointments and Christmas Carol.
III. Year of Departure for Italy.
IV. Idleness at Albaro: Villa Bagnerello.
V. Work in Genoa: Palazzo Peschiere.
VI. Italian Travel.
VII. Last Months in Italy.

I.

FIRST YEAR OF MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT.

1843.

THE Cornish trip had come off, meanwhile, with such unexpected and continued attraction for us that we were well into the third week of absence before we turned our faces homeward. Railways helped us then not much; but where the roads were inaccessible to post-horses, we walked. Tintagel was visited, and no part of mountain or sea consecrated by the legends of Arthur was left unexplored. We ascended to the cradle of the highest tower of Mount St. Michael, and descended into several mines. Land and sea yielded each its marvels to us; but of all the impressions brought away, of which some afterwards took forms as lasting as they could receive from the most delightful art, I doubt if any were the source of such deep emotion to us all as a sunset we saw at Land's-end. Stanfield knew the wonders of the Continent, the glories of Ireland were native to Maclise, I was familiar from boyhood with border and Scottish scenery, and Dickens was fresh from Niagara; but there was something in the sinking of the sun behind the Atlantic that autumn afternoon, as we viewed it together from the top of the rock projecting farthest into the sea, which each in his turn declared to have no parallel in memory.

CORNWALL: 1842.

A sunset at Land's-end.

But with the varied and overflowing gladness of those three memorable weeks it would be unworthy now to associate only the saddened recollection of the sole survivor. 'Blessed star of morning!' wrote Dickens to Felton while yet the glow of its enjoyment was upon him. 'Such a trip as we had into Cornwall 'just after Longfellow went away! . . Sometimes we travelled all 'night, sometimes all day, sometimes both. . . Heavens! If 'you could have seen the necks of bottles, distracting in their 'immense varieties of shape, peering out of the carriage pockets! 'If you could have witnessed the deep devotion of the post-boys,

Cornwall: 1842. Description by Dickens.

'the wild attachment of the hostlers, the maniac glee of the 'waiters! If you could have followed us into the earthy old 'churches we visited, and into the strange caverns on the gloomy 'sea-shore, and down into the depths of mines, and up to the 'tops of giddy heights where the unspeakably green water was 'roaring, I don't know how many hundred feet below! If you could 'have seen but one gleam of the bright fires by which we sat in the 'big rooms of the ancient inns at night, until long after the small 'hours had come and gone . . . I never laughed in my life as I 'did on this journey. It would have done you good to hear me. 'I was choking and gasping and bursting the buckle off the back 'of my stock, all the way. And Stanfield got into such apoplectic 'entanglements that we were often obliged to beat him on the 'back with portmanteaus before we could recover him. Seriously, 'I do believe there never was such a trip. And they made such 'sketches, those two men, in the most romantic of our halting-'places, that you would have sworn we had the Spirit of Beauty 'with us, as well as the Spirit of Fun.'

Sketches by Maclise and Stanfield.

The Logan Stone, by Stanfield, was one of them; and it laughingly sketched both the charm of what was seen and the mirth of what was done, for it perched me on the top of the stone. It is historical, however, the ascent having been made; and of this and other examples of steadiness at heights which deterred the rest, as well as of a subject suggested for a painting of which Dickens became the unknown purchaser, Maclise reminded me in some pleasant allusions many years later, which, notwithstanding their tribute to my athletic achievements, the good-natured reader must forgive my printing. They complete the little picture of our trip. Something I had written to him of recent travel among the mountain scenery of the wilder coasts of Donegal had touched the chord of these old remembrances. 'As to your clambering, he replied, 'don't I know what happened of old? Don't I still 'see the Logan Stone, and you perched on the giddy top, while 'we, rocking it on its pivot, shrank from all that lay concealed 'below! Should I ever have blundered on the waterfall of 'St. Wighton, if you had not piloted the way? And when we 'got to Land's-end, with the green sea far under us lapping into

Maclise's recollection of the journey.

'solitary rocky nooks where the mermaids live, who but you only 'had the courage to stretch over, to see those diamond jets of 'brightness that I swore then, and believe still, were the flappings 'of their tails! And don't I recall you again, sitting on the tip- 'top stone of the cradle-turret over the highest battlement of the 'castle of St. Michael's Mount, with not a ledge or coigne of 'vantage 'twixt you and the fathomless ocean under you, distant 'three thousand feet? Last, do I forget you clambering up the 'goat-path to King Arthur's castle of Tintagel, when, in my vain 'wish to follow, I grovelled and clung to the soil like a Caliban, 'and you, in the manner of a tricksy spirit and stout Ariel, 'actually danced up and down before me!' CORNWALL: 1842. Letter of Maclise.

The waterfall I led him to was among the records of the famous holiday, celebrated also by Thackeray in one of his pen-and-ink pleasantries, which were sent by both painters to the next year's Academy; and so eager was Dickens to possess this landscape by Maclise which included the likeness of a member of his family, yet so anxious that our friend should be spared the sacrifice which he knew would follow an avowal of his wish, that he bought it under a feigned name before the Academy opened, and steadily refused to take back the money which on discovery of the artifice Maclise pressed upon him. Our friend, who already had munificently given him a charming drawing of his four children to accompany him and his wife to America, had his generous way nevertheless; and as a voluntary offering four years later, painted Mrs. Dickens on a canvas of the same size as the picture of her husband in 1839. Maclise's 'Girl at the Waterfall.' Portrait of Mrs. Dickens.

'Behold finally the title of the new book,' was the first note I had from Dickens (12th of November) after our return; 'don't 'lose it, for I have no copy.' Title and even story had been undetermined while we travelled, from the lingering wish he still had to begin it among those Cornish scenes; but this intention had now been finally abandoned, and the reader lost nothing by his substitution, for the lighthouse or mine in Cornwall, of the Wiltshire-village forge on the windy autumn evening which opens the tale of *Martin Chuzzlewit*. Into that name he finally settled, but only after much deliberation, as a mention of his changes Names first given to *Chuzzlewit*.

London: 1842.

will show. Martin was the prefix to all, but the surname varied from its first form of Sweezleden, Sweezleback, and Sweezlewag, to those of Chuzzletoe, Chuzzleboy, Chubblewig, and Chuzzlewig; nor was Chuzzlewit chosen at last until after more hesitation and discussion. What he had sent me in his letter as finally adopted, ran thus: 'The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewig, his 'family, friends, and enemies. Comprising all his wills and his 'ways. With an historical record of what he did and what he 'didn't. The whole forming a complete key to the house of 'Chuzzlewig.' All which latter portion of the title was of course dropped as the work became modified, in its progress, by changes at first not contemplated; but as early as the third number he drew up the plan of 'old Martin's plot to degrade and punish Peck-'sniff,' and the difficulties he encountered in departing from other portions of his scheme were such as to render him, in his subsequent stories, more bent upon constructive care at the outset, and on adherence as far as might be to any design he had formed.

Title chosen.

First No. of *Chuzzlewit.*

The first number, which appeared in January 1843, had not been quite finished when he wrote to me on the 8th of December: 'The Chuzzlewit copy makes so much more than I supposed, 'that the number is nearly done. Thank God!' Beginning so hurriedly as at last he did, altering his course at the opening and seeing little as yet of the main track of his design, perhaps no story was ever begun by him with stronger heart or confidence. Illness kept me to my rooms for some days, and he was so eager to try the effect of Pecksniff and Pinch that he came down with the ink hardly dry on the last slip to read the manuscript to me.

Sydney Smith's opinion.

Well did Sydney Smith, in writing to say how very much the number had pleased him, foresee the promise there was in those characters. 'Pecksniff and his daughters, and Pinch, are admir-'able—quite first-rate painting, such as no one but yourself can 'execute!' And let me here at once remark that the notion of taking Pecksniff for a type of character was really the origin of the book; the design being to show, more or less by every person introduced, the number and variety of humours and vices that have their root in selfishness.

Another piece of his writing that claims mention at the close of

1842 was a prologue contributed to the *Patrician's Daughter*, Mr. Westland Marston's first dramatic effort, which had attracted him by the beauty of its composition less than by the courage with which its subject had been chosen from the actual life of the time. LONDON: 1842. Prologue to a play.

'Not light its import, and not poor its mien;
'Yourselves the actors, and your homes the scene.'

This was the date, too, of Mr. Browning's tragedy of the *Blot on the 'Scutcheon*, which I took upon myself, after reading it in the manuscript, privately to impart to Dickens; and I was not mistaken in the belief that it would profoundly touch him. 'Browning's play,' he wrote (25th of November), 'has thrown me 'into a perfect passion of sorrow. To say that there is anything 'in its subject save what is lovely, true, deeply affecting, full of 'the best emotion, the most earnest feeling, and the most true and 'tender source of interest, is to say that there is no light in the 'sun, and no heat in blood. It is full of genius, natural and great 'thoughts, profound and yet simple and beautiful in its vigour. I 'know nothing that is so affecting, nothing in any book I have ever 'read, as Mildred's recurrence to that "I was so young—I had '"no mother." I know no love like it, no passion like it, no 'moulding of a splendid thing after its conception, like it. And 'I swear it is a tragedy that MUST be played; and must be played, 'moreover, by Macready. There are some things I would have 'changed if I could (they are very slight, mostly broken lines); 'and I assuredly would have the old servant *begin his tale upon the 'scene;* and be taken by the throat, or drawn upon, by his master, 'in its commencement. But the tragedy I never shall forget, or 'less vividly remember than I do now. And if you tell Browning 'that I have seen it, tell him that I believe from my soul there is 'no man living (and not many dead) who could produce such a 'work.—Macready likes the altered prologue very much.' . . . A tragedy by Browning.

There will come a more convenient time to speak of his general literary likings, or special regard for contemporary books; but I will say now that nothing interested him more than successes won honestly in his own field, and that in his large and open nature No petty jealousies.

London: 1842.

there was no hiding-place for little jealousies. An instance occurs to me which may be named at once, when, many years after the present date, he called my attention very earnestly to two tales then in course of publication in *Blackwood's Magazine*, and afterwards collected under the title of *Scenes of Clerical Life*. 'Do 'read them,' he wrote. 'They are the best things I have seen 'since I began my course.'

'George Eliot's' first book.

Eighteen hundred and forty-three* opened with the most vigorous prosecution of his *Chuzzlewit* labour. 'I hope the 'number will be very good,' he wrote to me of number two (8th of January). 'I have been hammering away, and at home all 'day. Ditto yesterday; except for two hours in the afternoon, 'when I ploughed through snow half a foot deep, round about the 'wilds of Willesden.' For the present, however, I shall glance only briefly from time to time at his progress with the earlier portions of the story on which he was thus engaged until the midsummer of 1844. Disappointments arose in connection with it, unexpected and strange, which had important influence upon him: but I reserve the mention of these for awhile, that I may speak of the leading incidents of 1843.

Accompaniments of work.

'I am in a difficulty,' he wrote (12th of February), 'and am 'coming down to you some time to-day or to-night. I couldn't 'write a line yesterday; not a word, though I really tried hard. 'In a kind of despair I started off at half-past two with my pair of 'petticoats to Richmond; and dined there!! Oh what a lovely 'day it was in those parts.' His pair of petticoats were Mrs. Dickens and her sister Georgina: the latter, since his return from

* In one of the letters to his American friend Mr. Felton there is a glimpse of Christmas sports which had escaped my memory, and for which a corner may be found here, inasmuch as these gambols were characteristic of him at the pleasant old season, and were frequently renewed in future years. 'The best of it is' (31 Dec. 1842) 'that Forster and I have purchased 'between us the entire stock-in-trade 'of a conjuror, the practice and display whereof is entrusted to me. . . 'In those tricks which require a confederate I am assisted (by reason of 'his imperturbable good humour) by 'Stanfield, who always does his part 'exactly the wrong way, to the unspeakable delight of all beholders. 'We come out on a small scale to-night, at Forster's, where we see the 'old year out and the new one in.' —*Atlantic Monthly*, July 1871.

Christmas sports.

Maclise R.A. C.H.Jeens

CHARLES DICKENS, HIS WIFE, & HER SISTER.

DRAWN BY MACLISE IN 1842.

America, having become part of his household, of which she remained a member until his death; and he had just reason to be proud of the steadiness, depth, and devotion of her friendship. In a note-book begun by him in January 1855, where for the first time in his life he jotted down hints and fancies proposed to be made available in future writings, I find a character sketched of which the most part was applicable to his sister-in-law, if the whole was not suggested by her. 'She—sacrificed to children, and sufficiently 'rewarded. From a child herself, always "the children" (of 'somebody else) to engross her. And so it comes to pass that 'she is never married; never herself has a child; is always 'devoted "to the children" (of somebody else); and they love 'her; and she has always youth dependent on her till her death '—and dies quite happily.' Not many days after that holiday at Richmond, a slight unstudied outline in pencil was made by Maclise of the three who formed the party there, as we all sat together; and never did a touch so light carry with it more truth of observation. The likenesses of all are excellent; and I here preserve the drawing because nothing ever done of Dickens himself has conveyed more vividly his look and bearing at this yet youthful time. He is in his most pleasing aspect; flattered, if you will; but nothing that is known to me gives a general impression so lifelike and true of the then frank, eager, handsome face.

LONDON: 1843. Miss Georgina Hogarth. Pencil drawing by Maclise.

It was a year of much illness with me, which had ever helpful and active sympathy from him. 'Send me word how you are,' he wrote, two days later. 'But not so much for that I now write, as 'to tell you, peremptorily, that I insist on your wrapping yourself 'up and coming here in a hackney-coach, with a big portmanteau, 'to-morrow. It surely is better to be unwell with a Quick and 'Cheerful (and Co) in the neighbourhood, than in the dreary 'vastness of Lincoln's-inn-fields. Here is the snuggest tent-'bedstead in the world, and there you are with the drawing-room 'for your workshop, the Q and C for your pal, and "everythink '"in a concatenation accordingly." I begin to have hopes of 'the regeneration of mankind after the reception of Gregory last 'night, though I have none of the *Chronicle* for not denouncing

Help in sickness. A public scandal.

London: 1843.

'the villain.* Have you seen the note touching my *Notes* in the 'blue and yellow?'

The first of those closing allusions was to the editor of the infamous *Satirist* having been hissed from the Covent-garden stage, on which he had presented himself in the character of Hamlet; and I remember with what infinite pleasure I afterwards heard Chief Justice Tindal in court, charging the jury in an action brought by this malefactor, and referring to a publican of St. Giles's as having paid men to take part in hissing him, avow the pride felt in 'living in the same parish with a man of that humble 'station of life,' who was capable of paying money out of his pocket to punish what he believed to be an outrage to decency. The second allusion was to a statement of the reviewer of the *American Notes* in the *Edinburgh* to the effect, that, if he had been rightly informed, Dickens had gone to America as a kind of missionary in the cause of international copyright; to which a prompt contradiction had been given in the *Times*. 'I deny it,' wrote Dickens, 'wholly. He is wrongly informed; and reports, 'without enquiry, a piece of information which I could only 'characterize by using one of the shortest and strongest words in 'the language.'

Tindal C. J. on a public benefactor.

Dickens and international copyright.

The disputes that had arisen out of his work on America, I may add, stretched over great part of the year. It will quite suffice, however, to say here that the ground taken by him in his letters written on the spot, and printed in the present volume, which in all the more material statements his book invited public judgment upon and which he was moved to reopen in *Chuzzlewit*, was so kept by him against all comers, that none of the counter-statements or arguments dislodged him from a square inch of it. But the controversy is dead now; and he took occasion, on his later visit to America, to write its epitaph.

Controversy as to America.

* It atoned for its present silence by a severe notice of the man's later appearance at the Haymarket, of which I am glad to be reminded by Mr. Gruneisen, who wrote the criticism. The son of the publican subsequently referred to as giving evidence in the action against the Duke of Brunswick (Mr. Whelpdale, of Streatham) informs me that he also was a witness in the case, and that he has had pride in repeating to his own children what he heard the Chief Justice say of h father.

Though I did not, to revert to his February letter, obey its cordial bidding by immediately taking up quarters with him, I soon after joined him at a cottage he rented in Finchley; and here, walking and talking in the green lanes as the midsummer months were coming on, his introduction of Mrs. Gamp, and the uses to which he should apply that remarkable personage, first occurred to him. In his preface to the book he speaks of her as a fair representation, at the time it was published, of the hired attendant on the poor in sickness: but he might have added that the rich were no better off, for Mrs. Gamp's original was in reality a person hired by a most distinguished friend of his own, a lady, to take charge of an invalid very dear to her; and the common habit of this nurse in the sick room, among other Gampish peculiarities, was to rub her nose along the top of the tall fender. Whether or not, on that first mention of her, I had any doubts whether such a character could be made a central figure in his story, I do not now remember; but if there were any at the time, they did not outlive the contents of the packet which introduced her to me in the flesh a few weeks after our return. 'Tell 'me,' he wrote from Yorkshire, where he had been meanwhile passing pleasant holiday with a friend, 'what you think of Mrs. 'Gamp? You'll not find it easy to get through the hundreds of 'misprints in her conversation, but I want your opinion at once. 'I think you know already something of mine. I mean to make 'a mark with her.' The same letter enclosed me a clever and pointed parable in verse which he had written for an annual edited by Lady Blessington.*

LONDON: 1843.

Cottage at Finchley.

Mrs. Gamp: and from whom taken.

Another allusion in the February letter reminds me of the interest which his old work for the *Chronicle* gave him in everything affecting its credit, and that this was the year when Mr. John Black ceased to be the editor, in circumstances reviving strongly all Dickens's sympathies. 'I am deeply grieved' (3rd of May 1843) 'about Black. Sorry from my heart's core. If I could 'find him out, I would go and comfort him this moment.' He did find him out; and he and a certain number of us did also

Change of editorship at *Chronicle*: see *ante*, 65.

* 'I have heard, as you have, from 'Lady Blessington, for whose behoof 'I have this morning penned the 'lines I send you herewith. But I

London: 1843.

Dinner to John Black.

comfort this excellent man after a fashion extremely English, by giving him a Greenwich dinner on the 20th of May; when Dickens had arranged and ordered all to perfection, and the dinner succeeded in its purpose, as in other ways, quite wonderfully. Among the entertainers were Sheil and Thackeray, Fonblanque and Charles Buller, Southwood Smith and William Johnson Fox, Macready and Maclise, as well as myself and Dickens.

'have only done so to excuse myself, 'for I have not the least idea of their 'suiting her; and I hope she will send 'them back to you for the *Ex.*' July 1843. The lines are quite worth preserving.

A WORD IN SEASON.

Written for a friend.

They have a superstition in the East,
That Allah, written on a piece of paper,
Is better unction than can come of priest,
Of rolling incense, and of lighted taper:
Holding, that any scrap which bears that name
In any characters its front impress'd on,
Shall help the finder thro' the purging flame,
And give his toasted feet a place to rest on.

Accordingly, they make a mighty fuss
With every wretched tract and fierce oration,
And hoard the leaves—for they are not, like us
A highly civilized and thinking nation:
And, always stooping in the miry ways
To look for matter of this earthly leaven,
They seldom, in their dust-exploring days,
Have any leisure to look up to Heaven.

So have I known a country on the earth
Where darkness sat upon the living waters,
And brutal ignorance, and toil, and dearth
Were the hard portion of its sons and daughters:
And yet, where they who should have oped the door
Of charity and light, for all men's finding,
Squabbled for words upon the altar-floor,
And rent The Book, in struggles for the binding.

The gentlest man among those pious Turks
God's living image ruthlessly defaces;
Their best High-Churchman, with no faith in works,
Bowstrings the Virtues in the market-places.
The Christian Pariah, whom both sects curse
(They curse all other men, and curse each other),
Walks thro' the world, not very much the worse,
Does all the good he can, and loves his brother.

There followed another similar celebration, in which one of those entertainers was the guest and that owed hardly less to Dickens's exertions, when, at the Star-and-garter at Richmond in the autumn, we wished Macready good-speed on his way to America. Dickens took the chair at that dinner; and with Stanfield, Maclise, and myself, was in the following week to have accompanied the great actor to Liverpool to say good-bye to him on board the Cunard ship, and bring his wife back to London after their leave-taking; when a word from our excellent friend Captain Marryat, startling to all of us except Dickens himself, struck him out of our party. Marryat thought that Macready might suffer in the States by any public mention of his having been attended on his way by the author of the *American Notes* and *Martin Chuzzlewit*, and our friend at once agreed with him. 'Your main and foremost reason,' he wrote to me, 'for doubting 'Marryat's judgment, I can at once destroy. It has occurred to 'me many times; I have mentioned the thing to Kate more than 'once; and I had intended *not* to go on board, charging Radley 'to let nothing be said of my being in his house. I have been 'prevented from giving any expression to my fears by a misgiving 'that I should seem to attach, if I did so, too much importance to 'my own doings. But now that I have Marryat at my back, I 'have not the least hesitation in saying that I am certain he is right. 'I have very great apprehensions that the *Nickleby* dedication will 'damage Macready. Marryat is wrong in supposing it is not 'printed in the American editions, for I have myself seen it in 'the shop windows of several cities. If I were to go on board 'with him, I have not the least doubt that the fact would be 'placarded all over New York, before he had shaved himself in 'Boston. And that there are thousands of men in America who 'would pick a quarrel with him on the mere statement of his 'being my friend, I have no more doubt than I have of my 'existence. You have only doubted Marryat because it is 'impossible for *any man* to know what they are in their own 'country, who has not seen them there.'

LONDON: 1843.

Macready bound for America.

A doubt of Marryat's.

Apprehended disservice to Macready.

This letter was written from Broadstairs, whither he had gone in August, after such help as he only could give, and never took

Works of charity and mercy.

BROADSTAIRS: 1843.

such delight as in giving, to a work of practical humanity. Earlier in the year he had presided at a dinner for the Printers' Pension-fund, which Thomas Hood, Douglas Jerrold, and myself attended with him; and upon the terrible summer-evening accident at sea by which Mr. Elton the actor lost his life, it was mainly by Dickens's unremitting exertions, seconded admirably by Mr. Serle and warmly taken up by Mr. Elton's own profession (the most generous in the world), that ample provision was made for the many children.

Mr. Elton's family.

At the close of August I had news of him from his favourite watering-place, too characteristic to be omitted. The day before had been a day of 'terrific heat,' yet this had not deterred him from doing what he was too often suddenly prone to do in the midst of his hardest work. 'I performed an insane match 'against time of eighteen miles by the milestones in four hours 'and a half, under a burning sun the whole way. I could get' (he is writing next morning) 'no sleep at night, and really began to 'be afraid I was going to have a fever. You may judge in what 'kind of authorship-training I am to-day. I could as soon eat the 'cliff as write about anything.' A few days later, however, all was well again; and a sketch of himself for his friend Professor Felton will show his sea-side life in ordinary. 'In a bay-window 'in a one-pair sits, from nine o'clock to one, a gentleman with 'rather long hair and no neckcloth, who writes and grins as if he 'thought he were very funny indeed. At one he disappears, 'presently emerges from a bathing-machine, and may be seen, a 'kind of salmon-coloured porpoise, splashing about in the ocean. 'After that he may be viewed in another bay-window on the 'ground floor, eating a strong lunch; and after that, walking a 'dozen miles or so, or lying on his back in the sand reading a 'book. Nobody bothers him unless they know he is disposed to 'be talked to; and I am told he is very comfortable indeed. He's 'as brown as a berry, and they *do* say is a small fortune to the 'innkeeper who sells beer and cold punch. But this is mere 'rumour. Sometimes he goes up to London (eighty miles or so 'away), and then I'm told there is a sound in Lincoln's-inn-fields 'at night, as of men laughing, together with a clinking of knives 'and forks and wine-glasses.'

Sea-side life in ordinary.

Self-portraiture.

He returned to town 'for good' on Monday the 2nd of October, and from the Wednesday to the Friday of that week was at Manchester, presiding at the opening of its great Athenæum, when Mr. Cobden and Mr. Disraeli also 'assisted.' Here he spoke mainly on a matter always nearest his heart, the education of the very poor. He protested against the danger of calling a little learning dangerous; declared his preference for the very least of the little over none at all; proposed to substitute for the old a new doggerel,

MANCHESTER: 1843. Opening of Manchester Athenæum.

> Though house and lands be never got,
> Learning can give what they can *not;*

told his listeners of the real and paramount danger we had lately taken Longfellow to see in the nightly refuges of London, 'thousands of immortal creatures condemned without alternative or 'choice to tread, not what our great poet calls the primrose path 'to the everlasting bonfire, but one of jagged flints and stones 'laid down by brutal ignorance;' and contrasted this with the unspeakable consolation and blessings that a little knowledge had shed on men of the lowest estate and most hopeless means, 'watching the stars with Ferguson the shepherd's boy, walking the 'streets with Crabbe, a poor barber here in Lancashire with Arkwright, a tallow-chandler's son with Franklin, shoe-making with 'Bloomfield in his garret, following the plough with Burns, and, 'high above the noise of loom and hammer, whispering courage 'in the ears of workers I could this day name in Sheffield and in 'Manchester.'

Speech on education of the poor.

The same spirit impelled him to give eager welcome to the remarkable institution of Ragged schools, which, begun by a shoemaker of Portsmouth and a chimney-sweep of Windsor and carried on by a peer of the realm, has had results of incalculable importance to society. The year of which I am writing was its first, as this in which I write is its last; and in the interval, out of three hundred thousand children to whom it has given some sort of education, it is computed also to have given to a third of that number the means of honest employment.* 'I sent Miss Coutts,'

Ragged schools.

* 'After a period of 27 years, from 'a single school of five small infants, 'the work has grown into a cluster of 'some 300 schools, an aggregate of

LONDON: 1843.

he had written (24th of September), 'a sledge-hammer account of 'the Ragged schools; and as I saw her name for two hundred 'pounds in the clergy education subscription-list, took pains to 'show her that religious mysteries and difficult creeds wouldn't 'do for such pupils. I told her, too, that it was of immense 'importance they should be *washed*. She writes back to know 'what the rent of some large airy premises would be, and what 'the expense of erecting a regular bathing or purifying place; 'touching which points I am in correspondence with the authori- 'ties. I have no doubt she will do whatever I ask her in the 'matter. She is a most excellent creature, I protest to God, and 'I have a most perfect affection and respect for her.'

A great lady's beneficence.

Proposed paper on Ragged schools:

One of the last things he did at the close of the year, in the like spirit, was to offer to describe the Ragged schools for the *Edinburgh Review*. 'I have told Napier,' he wrote to me, 'I will 'give a description of them in a paper on education, if the *Review* 'is not afraid to take ground against the church catechism and 'other mere formularies and subtleties, in reference to the educa- 'tion of the young and ignorant. I fear it is extremely improbable 'it will consent to commit itself so far.' His fears were well-founded: but the statements then made by him give me opportunity to add that it was his impatience of differences on this point with clergymen of the Established Church that had led him, for the past year or two, to take sittings in the Little Portland-street Unitarian chapel; for whose officiating minister, Mr.

Declined by *Ed. Rev.*

Results of Ragged schools.

'nearly 30,000 children, and a body 'of 3000 voluntary teachers, most of 'them the sons and daughters of toil. . . . 'Of more than 300,000 children 'which, on the most moderate calcu- 'lation, we have a right to conclude 'have passed through these schools 'since their commencement, I venture 'to affirm that more than 100,000 of 'both sexes have been placed out in 'various ways, in emigration, in the 'marine, in trades, and in domestic 'service. For many consecutive years 'I have contributed prizes to thou- 'sands of the scholars; and let no 'one omit to call to mind what these 'children were, whence they came, 'and whither they were going without 'this merciful intervention. They 'would have been added to the peril- 'ous swarm of the wild, the lawless, 'the wretched, and the ignorant, in- 'stead of being, as by God's blessing 'they are, decent and comfortable, 'earning an honest livelihood, and 'adorning the community to which 'they belong.' *Letter of Lord Shaftesbury in the Times of the 13th of November*, 1871.

Edward Tagart, he had a friendly regard which continued long after he had ceased to be a member of his congregation. That he did so cease, after two or three years, I can distinctly state; and of the frequent agitation of his mind and thoughts in connection with this all-important theme, there will be other occasions to speak. But upon essential points he had never any sympathy so strong as with the leading doctrines of the Church of England; to these, as time went on, he found himself able to accommodate all minor differences; and the unswerving faith in Christianity itself, apart from sects and schisms, which had never failed him at any period of his life, found expression at its close in the language of his will. Twelve months before his death, these words were written. 'I direct that my name be inscribed in plain 'English letters on my tomb . . . I conjure my friends on 'no account to make me the subject of any monument, memorial, 'or testimonial whatever. I rest my claim to the remembrance of 'my country on my published works, and to the remembrance of 'my friends upon their experience of me in addition thereto. I 'commit my soul to the mercy of God, through our Lord and 'Saviour Jesus Christ; and I exhort my dear children humbly to 'try to guide themselves by the teaching of the New Testament 'in its broad spirit, and to put no faith in any man's narrow con-'struction of its letter here or there.'

LONDON: 1843.

Religious opinions.

Language of his Will.

Active as he had been in the now ending year, and great as were its varieties of employment; his genius in its highest mood, his energy unwearied in good work, and his capacity for enjoyment without limit; he was able to signalize its closing months by an achievement supremely fortunate, which but for disappointments the year had also brought might never have been thought of. He had not begun until a week after his return from Manchester, where the fancy first occurred to him, and before the end of November he had finished, his memorable *Christmas Carol.* It was the work of such odd moments of leisure as were left him out of the time taken up by two numbers of his *Chuzzlewit;* and though begun with but the special design of adding something to the *Chuzzlewit* balance, I can testify to the accuracy of his own account of what befell him in its composition, with what

Christmas Carol.

LONDON: 1843.

a strange mastery it seized him for itself, how he wept over it, and laughed, and wept again, and excited himself to an extraordinary degree, and how he walked thinking of it fifteen and twenty miles about the black streets of London, many and many a night after all sober folks had gone to bed. And when it was done, as he told our American friend Mr. Felton, he let himself loose like a madman. 'Forster is out again,' he added, by way of illustrating our practical comments on his book-celebration of the jovial old season, 'and if he don't go in again after the manner 'in which we have been keeping Christmas, he must be very 'strong indeed. Such dinings, such dancings, such conjurings, 'such blind-man's buffings, such theatre-goings, such kissings-out 'of old years and kissings-in of new ones, never took place in 'these parts before.'

Practical commentary on *Carol.*

An anxious time.

Yet had it been to him, this closing year, a time also of much anxiety and strange disappointments of which I am now to speak; and before, with that view, we go back for a while to its earlier months, one step into the new year may be taken for what marked it with interest and importance to him. Eighteen hundred and forty-four was but fifteen days old when a third son (his fifth child, which received the name of its godfather Francis Jeffrey) was born; and here is an answer sent by him, two days later, to an invitation from Maclise, Stanfield, and myself to dine with us at Richmond. 'DEVONSHIRE LODGE, *Seventeenth of* '*January*, 1844. FELLOW COUNTRYMEN! The appeal with which 'you have honoured me, awakens within my breast emotions that 'are more easily to be imagined than described. Heaven bless 'you. I shall indeed be proud, my friends, to respond to such a 'requisition. I had withdrawn from Public Life—I fondly 'thought for ever—to pass the evening of my days in hydro-'pathical pursuits, and the contemplation of virtue. For which 'latter purpose, I had bought a looking-glass.—But, my friends, 'private feeling must ever yield to a stern sense of public duty. 'The Man is lost in the Invited Guest, and I comply. Nurses, 'wet and dry; apothecaries; mothers-in-law; babies; with all 'the sweet (and chaste) delights of private life; these, my coun-'trymen, are hard to leave. But you have called me forth, and I

Third son born.

'will come. Fellow countrymen, your friend and faithful servant, LONDON: 1843.
'CHARLES DICKENS.'

II.

CHUZZLEWIT DISAPPOINTMENTS AND CHRISTMAS CAROL.

1843—1844.

CHUZZLEWIT had fallen short of all the expectations formed of it in regard to sale. By much the most masterly of his writings hitherto, the public had rallied to it in far less numbers than to any of its predecessors. The primary cause of this, there is little doubt, had been the change to weekly issues in the form of publication of his last two stories; for into everything in this world mere habit enters more largely than we are apt to suppose. Nor had the temporary withdrawal to America been favourable to an immediate resumption by his readers of their old and intimate relations. This also is to be added, that the excitement by which a popular reputation is kept up to the highest selling mark will always be subject to lulls too capricious for explanation. But whatever the causes, here was the undeniable fact of a grave depreciation of sale in his writings, unaccompanied by any falling off either in themselves or in the writer's reputation. It was very temporary; but it was present, and to be dealt with accordingly. The forty and fifty thousand purchasers of *Pickwick* and *Nickleby*, the sixty and seventy thousand of the early numbers of the enterprise in which the *Old Curiosity Shop* and *Barnaby Rudge* appeared, had fallen to little over twenty thousand. They rose somewhat on Martin's ominous announcement, at the end of the fourth number, that he'd *go to America*; but though it was believed that this resolve, which Dickens adopted as suddenly as his hero, might increase the number of his readers, that reason influenced him less than the challenge to make good his *Notes* which every mail had been bringing him from unsparing assailants beyond the Atlantic. The substantial effect of the American episode upon the sale was yet by no means great. A couple of

Sale of *Chuzzlewit*: less than that of former books.

Effect of American episode.

LONDON: 1843.

thousand additional purchasers were added, but the highest number at any time reached before the story closed was twenty-three thousand. Its sale, since, has ranked next after *Pickwick* and *Copperfield*.

Publishers and authors.

We were now, however, to have a truth brought home to us which few that have had real or varied experience in such matters can have failed to be impressed by—that publishers are bitter bad judges of an author, and are seldom safe persons to consult in regard to the fate or fortunes that may probably await him. Describing the agreement for this book in September 1841, I spoke of a provision against the improbable event of its profits proving inadequate to certain necessary repayments. In this unlikely case, which was to be ascertained by the proceeds of the first five numbers, the publishers were to have power to appropriate fifty pounds a month out of the two hundred pounds payable for authorship in the expenses of each number; but though this had been introduced with my knowledge, I knew also too much of the antecedent relations of the parties to regard it as other than a mere form to satisfy the attorneys in the case. The fifth number, which landed Martin and Mark in America, and the sixth, which described their first experiences, were published; and on the eve of the seventh, in which Mrs. Gamp was to make her first appearance, I heard with infinite pain that from Mr. Hall, the younger partner of the firm which had enriched itself by *Pickwick* and *Nickleby*, and a very kind well-disposed man, there had dropped an inconsiderate hint to the writer of those books that it might be desirable to put the clause in force. It had escaped him without his thinking of all that it involved; certainly the senior partner, whatever amount of as thoughtless sanction he had at the moment given to it, always much regretted it, and made endeavours to exhibit his regret; but the mischief was done, and for the time was irreparable.

Ante, 150.

Unlucky clause.

Premature fears.

Resentment.

'I am so irritated,' Dickens wrote to me on the 28th of June, 'so rubbed in the tenderest part of my eyelids with bay-salt, by 'what I told you yesterday, that a wrong kind of fire is burning 'in my head, and I don't think I *can* write. Nevertheless, I am 'trying. In case I should succeed, and should not come down

'to you this morning, shall you be at the club or elsewhere after 'dinner? I am bent on paying the money. And before going 'into the matter with anybody I should like you to propound 'from me the one preliminary question to Bradbury and Evans. 'It is more than a year and a half since Clowes wrote to urge me 'to give him a hearing, in case I should ever think of altering 'my plans. A printer is better than a bookseller, and it is quite 'as much the interest of one (if not more) to join me. But who-'ever it is, or whatever, I am bent upon paying Chapman and 'Hall *down*. And when I have done that, Mr. Hall shall have a 'piece of my mind.'

LONDON: 1843. Resolve to have other publishers.

What he meant by the proposed repayment will be understood by what formerly was said of his arrangements with those gentlemen on the repurchase of his early copyrights. Feeling no surprise at this announcement, I yet prevailed with him to suspend proceedings until his return from Broadstairs in October; and what then I had to say led to memorable resolves. The communication he had desired me to make to his printers had taken them too much by surprise to enable them to form a clear judgment respecting it; and they replied by suggestions which were in effect a confession of that want of confidence in themselves. They enlarged upon the great results that would follow a re-issue of his writings in a cheap form; they strongly urged such an undertaking; and they offered to invest to any desired amount in the establishment of a magazine or other periodical to be edited by him. The possible dangers, in short, incident to their assuming the position of publishers as well as printers of new works from his pen, seemed at first to be so much greater than on closer examination they were found to be, that at the outset they shrank from encountering them. And hence the remarkable letter I shall now quote (1st of November, 1843).

Ante, 80, 150.

A proposal to his printers.

Their reception of it.

'Don't be startled by the novelty and extent of my project. 'Both startled *me* at first; but I am well assured of its wisdom 'and necessity. I am afraid of a magazine—just now. I don't 'think the time a good one, or the chances favourable. I am 'afraid of putting myself before the town as writing tooth and 'nail for bread, headlong, after the close of a book taking so

His own view of his position.

LONDON: 1843.

'much out of one as *Chuzzlewit*. I am afraid I could not do it, 'with justice to myself. I know that whatever we may say at 'first, a new magazine, or a new anything, would require so much 'propping, that I should be *forced* (as in the *Clock*) to put myself 'into it, in my old shape. I am afraid of Bradbury and Evans's 'desire to force on the cheap issue of my books, or any of them, 'prematurely. I am sure if it took place yet awhile, it would 'damage me and damage the property, *enormously*. It is very 'natural in them to want it; but, since they do want it, I have no 'faith in their regarding me in any other respect than they would 'regard any other man in a speculation. I see that this is really 'your opinion as well; and I don't see what I gain, in such 'a case, by leaving Chapman and Hall. If I had made money, 'I should unquestionably fade away from the public eye for a 'year, and enlarge my stock of description and observation by 'seeing countries new to me; which it is most necessary to me 'that I should see, and which with an increasing family I can 'scarcely hope to see at all, unless I see them now. Already for 'some time I have had this hope and intention before me; and, 'though not having yet made money, I find or fancy that I can 'put myself in the position to accomplish it. And this is the 'course I have before me. At the close of *Chuzzlewit* (by which 'time the debt will have been materially reduced) I purpose 'drawing from Chapman and Hall my share of the subscription— 'bills, or money, will do equally well. I design to tell them that 'it is not likely I shall do anything for a year; that, in the mean- 'time, I make no arrangement whatever with any one; and our 'business matters rest *in statu quo*. The same to Bradbury and 'Evans. I shall let the house if I can; if not, leave it to be let. 'I shall take all the family, and two servants—three at most—to 'some place which I know beforehand to be CHEAP and in a 'delightful climate, in Normandy or Brittany, to which I shall go 'over, first, and where I shall rent some house for six or eight 'months. During that time, I shall walk through Switzerland, 'cross the Alps, travel through France and Italy; take Kate 'perhaps to Rome and Venice, but not elsewhere; and in short 'see everything that is to be seen. I shall write my descriptions

Doubts as to cheap edition now.

Desire to travel again.

Ante, 150.

A plan for seeing foreign cities.

'to you from time to time, exactly as I did in America; and you 'will be able to judge whether or not a new and attractive book 'may not be made on such ground. At the same time I shall be 'able to turn over the story I have in my mind, and which I have 'a strong notion might be published with great advantage, *first in Paris*—but that's another matter to be talked over. And of 'course I have not yet settled, either, whether any book about the 'travel, or this, should be the first. "All very well," you say, '"if you had money enough." Well, but if I can see my way to 'what would be necessary without binding myself in any form to 'anything; without paying interest, or giving any security but 'one of my Eagle five thousand pounds; you would give up that 'objection. And I stand committed to no bookseller, printer, 'money-lender, banker, or patron whatever; and decidedly 'strengthen my position with my readers, instead of weakening 'it, drop by drop, as I otherwise must. Is it not so? and is not 'the way before me, plainly this? I infer that in reality you do 'yourself think that what I first thought of is *not* the way? I 'have told you my scheme very baldly, as I said I would. I see 'its great points, against many prepossessions the other way—as, 'leaving England, home, friends, everything I am fond of—but it 'seems to me, at a critical time, *the* step to set me right. A 'blessing on Mr. Mariotti my Italian master, and his pupil!.. If 'you have any breath left, tell Topping how you are.'

LONDON: 1842.

Other books in his mind.

Ways and means.

I had certainly not much after reading this letter, written amid all the distractions of his work, with both the *Carol* and *Chuzzlewit* in hand; but such insufficient breath as was left to me I spent against the project, and in favour of far more consideration than he had given to it before anything should be settled. 'I expected 'you,' he wrote next day (the 2nd of November), 'to be startled. 'If I was startled myself, when I first got this project of foreign 'travel into my head, MONTHS AGO, how much more must you be, 'on whom it comes fresh: numbering only hours! Still, I am 'very resolute upon it—very. I am convinced that my expenses 'abroad would not be more than half of my expenses here; the 'influence of change and nature upon me, enormous. You 'know, as well as I, that I think *Chuzzlewit* in a hundred points

Objections to the scheme.

His own opinion of *Chuzzlewit*.

LONDON: 1843.

Confidence in himself.

'immeasurably the best of my stories. That I feel my power 'now, more than I ever did. That I have a greater confidence 'in myself than I ever had. That I *know*, if I have health, I 'could sustain my place in the minds of thinking men, though 'fifty writers started up to-morrow. But how many readers do '*not* think! How many take it upon trust from knaves and 'idiots, that one writes too fast, or runs a thing to death! How 'coldly did this very book go on for months, until it forced itself 'up in people's opinion, without forcing itself up in sale! If I

Want of confidence in others.

'wrote for forty thousand Forsters, or for forty thousand people 'who know I write because I can't help it, I should have no need 'to leave the scene. But this very book warns me that if I *can* 'leave it for a time, I had better do so, and must do so. Apart 'from that again, I feel that longer rest after this story would do 'me good. You say two or three months, because you have been 'used to see me for eight years never leaving off. But it is not 'rest enough. It is impossible to go on working the brain to 'that extent for ever. The very spirit of the thing, in doing it, 'leaves a horrible despondency behind, when it is done; which

Brainwork.

'must be prejudicial to the mind, so soon renewed and so seldom 'let alone. What would poor Scott have given to have gone 'abroad, of his own free will, a young man, instead of creeping 'there, a driveller, in his miserable decay! I said myself in my 'note to you—anticipating what you put to me—that it was a 'question *what* I should come out with, first. The travel-book, 'if to be done at all, would cost me very little trouble; and 'surely would go very far to pay charges, whenever published. 'We have spoken of the baby, and of leaving it here with 'Catherine's mother. Moving the children into France could 'not, in any ordinary course of things, do them anything but 'good. And the question is, what it would do to that by which 'they live: not what it would do to them... I had forgotten that

A suggestion of his printers.

'point in the B. and E. negociation; but they certainly suggested 'instant publication of the reprints, or at all events of some of 'them; by which of course I know, and as you point out, I 'could provide of myself what is wanted. I take that as putting 'the thing distinctly as a matter of trade, and feeling it so. And,

'as a matter of trade with them or anybody else, as a matter 'of trade between me and the public, should I not be better 'off a year hence, with the reputation of having seen so much 'in the meantime? The reason which induces you to look 'upon this scheme with dislike—separation for so long a time '—surely has equal weight with me. I see very little pleasure 'in it, beyond the natural desire to have been in those great 'scenes; I anticipate no enjoyment at the time. I have come to 'look upon it as a matter of policy and duty. I have a thousand 'other reasons, but shall very soon myself be with you.' LONDON: 1843. Bent on his own plan.

There were difficulties, still to be strongly urged, against taking any present step to a final resolve; and he gave way a little. But the pressure was soon renewed. 'I have been,' he wrote (10th of November), 'all day in *Chuzzlewit* agonies—conceiving only. I 'hope to bring forth to-morrow. Will you come here at six? I 'want to say a word or two about the cover of the *Carol* and the 'advertising, and to consult you on a nice point in the tale. It 'will come wonderfully I think. Mac will call here soon after, 'and we can then all three go to Bulwer's together. And do, my 'dear fellow, do for God's sake turn over about Chapman and 'Hall, and look upon my project as *a settled thing*. If you object 'to see them, I must write to them.' My reluctance to any present change in his publishing arrangements was connected with the little story, which, amid all his troubles and '*Chuzzlewit* 'agonies,' he was steadily carrying to its close; and which remains a splendid proof of the consciousness of power felt by him, and of his confidence that it had never been greater than when his readers were thus falling off from him. He had entrusted the *Carol* for publication on his own account, under the usual terms of commission, to the firm he had been so long associated with; and at such a moment to tell them, short of absolute necessity, his intention to quit them altogether, I thought a needless putting in peril of the little book's chances. He yielded to this argument; but the issue, as will be found, was less fortunate than I hoped. Preparation of *Carol*. Anxiety to change his publishers. Counsel for delay,

Let disappointments or annoyances, however, beset him as they might, once heartily in his work and all was forgotten. His tem-

LONDON: 1843.

Turning-point of his career.

perament of course coloured everything, cheerful or sad, and his present outlook was disturbed by imaginary fears; but it was very certain that his labours and successes thus far had enriched others more than himself, and while he knew that his mode of living had been scrupulously governed by what he believed to be his means, the first suspicion that these might be inadequate made a change necessary to so upright a nature. It was the turning-point of his career; and the issue, though not immediately, ultimately justified him. Much of his present restlessness I was too ready myself to ascribe to that love of change which was always arising from his passionate desire to vary and extend his observation; but even as to this the result showed him right in believing that he should obtain intellectual advantage from the effects of such farther travel. Here indeed he spoke from experience, for already he had returned from America with wider views than when he started, and with more maturity of mind. The money difficulties on which he dwelt were also, it is now to be admitted, unquestionable. Beyond his own domestic expenses necessarily increasing, there were many, never-satisfied, constantly-recurring claims from family quarters, not the more easily avoidable because unreasonable and unjust; and it was after describing to me one such with great bitterness, a few days following the letter last quoted, that he thus replied on the following day (19th of November) to the comment I had made upon it. 'I was most horribly put out for a little while; 'for I had got up early to go to work, and was full of interest 'in what I had to do. But having eased my mind by that note 'to you, and taken a turn or two up and down the room, I went 'at it again, and soon got so interested that I blazed away till 9 'last night; only stopping ten minutes for dinner! I suppose 'I wrote eight printed pages of *Chuzzlewit* yesterday. The con-'sequence is that I *could* finish to-day, but am taking it easy, and 'making myself laugh very much.' The very next day, unhappily, there came to himself a repetition of precisely similar trouble in exaggerated form, and to me a fresh reminder of what was gradually settling into a fixed resolve. 'I am quite serious 'and sober when I say, that I have very grave thoughts of keep-'ing my whole menagerie in Italy, three years.'

Solid grounds for course taken.

Work and its interruptions.

LONDON: 1843-4.

As to *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

Of the book which awoke such varied feelings and was the occasion of such vicissitudes of fortune, some notice is now due; and this, following still my former rule, will be not so much critical as biographical. He had left for Italy before the completed tale was published, and its reception for a time was exactly what his just-quoted letter prefigures. It had forced itself up in public opinion without forcing itself up in sale. It was felt generally to be an advance upon his previous stories, and his own opinion is not to be questioned that it was in a hundred points immeasurably the best of them thus far; less upon the surface, and going deeper into springs of character. Nor would it be difficult to say, in a single word, where the excellence lay that gave it this superiority. It had brought the highest faculty into play: over and above other qualities it had given scope to the imagination: and it first expressed the distinction in this respect between his earlier and his later books. Apart wholly from this, too, his letters will have confirmed a remark already made upon the degree to which his mental power had been enlarged by the effect of his visit to America.

Superiority to former books.

In construction and conduct of story *Martin Chuzzlewit* is defective, character and description constituting the chief part of its strength. But what it lost as a story by the American episode it gained in the other direction; young Martin, by happy use of a bitter experience, casting off his slough of selfishness in the poisonous swamp of Eden. Dickens often confessed, however, the difficulty it had been to him to have to deal with this gap in the main course of his narrative; and I will give an instance from a letter he wrote to me when engaged upon the number in which Jonas brings his wife to her miserable home. 'I write in 'haste' (28th of July, 1843), 'for I have been at work all day; 'and, it being against the grain with me to go back to America 'when my interest is strong in the other parts of the tale, have got 'on but slowly. I have a great notion to work out with Sydney's 'favourite,* and long to be at him again.' But obstructions of

Defects in story.

American portions.

* Chuffey. Sydney Smith had written to Dickens on the appearance of his fourth number (early in April): 'Chuffey is admirable. . . . 'I never read a finer piece of writing: 'it is deeply pathetic and affecting.'

LONDON: 1843-4.

this kind with Dickens measured only and always the degree of readiness and resource with which he rose to meet them, and never had his handling of character been so masterly as in *Chuzzlewit.* The persons delineated in former books had been more agreeable, but never so interpenetrated with meanings brought out with a grasp so large, easy, and firm. As well in this as in the passionate vividness of its descriptions, the imaginative power makes itself felt. The windy autumn night, with the mad desperation of the hunted leaves and the roaring mirth of the blazing village forge; the market-day at Salisbury; the winter walk, and the coach journey to London by night; the ship voyage over the Atlantic; the stormy midnight travel before the murder, the stealthy enterprise and cowardly return of the murderer; these are instances of first-rate description, original in the design, imaginative in all the detail, and very complete in the execution. But the higher power to which I direct attention is even better discerned in the persons and dialogue. With nothing absent or abated in its sharp impressions of reality, there are more of the subtle requisites which satisfy reflection and thought. We have in this book for the most part, not only observation but the outcome of it, the knowledge as well as the fact. While we witness as vividly the life immediately passing, we are more conscious of the permanent life above and beyond it. Nothing nearly so effective therefore had yet been achieved by him. He had scrutinised as truly and satirised as keenly; but had never shown the imaginative insight with which he now sent his humour and his art into the core of the vices of the time.

Handling of character.

Imaginative insight.

Sending me the second chapter of his eighth number on the 15th of August, he gave me the latest tidings from America. 'I 'gather from a letter I have had this morning that Martin has 'made them all stark staring raving mad across the water. I 'wish you would consider this. Don't you think the time has 'come when I ought to state that such public entertainments as I 'received in the States were either accepted before I went out, or 'in the first week after my arrival there; and that as soon as I 'began to have any acquaintance with the country, I set my face 'against any public recognition whatever but that which was

News from America.

'forced upon me to the destruction of my peace and comfort— 'and made no secret of my real sentiments.' We did not agree as to this, and the notion was abandoned; though his correspondent had not overstated the violence of the outbreak in the States when those chapters exploded upon them. But though an excitable they are a good humoured and placable people; and, as time moved on a little, the laughter on that side of the Atlantic became quite as great as our amusement on this side, at the astonishing fun and comicality of these scenes. With a little reflection the Americans had doubtless begun to find out that the advantage was not all with us, nor the laughter wholly against them.

LONDON: 1843-4. American anger short-lived.

They had no Pecksniff at any rate. Bred in a more poisonous swamp than their Eden, of greatly older standing and much harder to be drained, Pecksniff was all our own. The confession is not encouraging to national pride, but this character is so far English, that though our countrymen as a rule are by no means Pecksniffs the ruling weakness is to countenance and encourage the race. When people call the character exaggerated, and protest that the lines are too broad to deceive any one, they only refuse, naturally enough, to sanction in a book what half their lives is passed in tolerating if not in worshipping. Dickens, illustrating his never-failing experience of being obliged to subdue in his books what he knew to be real for fear it should be deemed impossible, had already made the remark in his preface to *Nickleby*, that the world, which is so very credulous in what professes to be true, is most incredulous in what professes to be imaginary. They agree to be deceived in a reality, and reward themselves by refusing to be deceived in a fiction. That a great many people who might have sat for Pecksniff, should condemn him for a grotesque impossibility, as Dickens averred to be the case, was no more than might be expected. A greater danger he has exposed more usefully in showing the larger numbers, who, desiring to be thought better than they are, support eagerly pretensions that keep their own in countenance, and, without being Pecksniffs, render Pecksniffs possible. All impostures would have something suspicious or

A worse swamp than Eden.

Difficulties that attend fiction.

Critical compromises.

Toleration of imposture.

London: 1843-4.

too forbidding in their look if we were not prepared to meet them half way.

There is one thing favourable to us however, even in this view, which a French critic has lately suggested. Informing us that there are no Pecksniffs to be found in France, Mr. Taine explains this by the fact that his countrymen have ceased to affect virtue, and pretend only to vice; that a charlatan setting up morality would have no sort of following; that religion and the domestic virtues have gone so utterly to rags as not to be worth putting on for a deceitful garment; and that, no principles being left to parade, the only chance for the French modern Tartuffe is to confess and exaggerate weaknesses. We seem to have something of an advantage here. We require at least that the respectable homage of vice to virtue should not be omitted. 'Charity, my 'dear,' says our English Tartuffe, upon being bluntly called what he really is, 'when I take my chamber-candlestick to-night, 'remind me to be more than usually particular in praying for 'Mr. Anthony Chuzzlewit, who has done me an injustice.' No amount of self-indulgence weakens or lowers his pious and reflective tone. 'Those are her daughters,' he remarks, making maudlin overtures to Mrs. Todgers in memory of his deceased wife. 'Mercy and Charity, Charity and Mercy, not unholy 'names I hope. She was beautiful. She had a small property.' When his condition is such that his friends have to put him to bed, they are only half down the staircase when he is seen to be "fluttering" on the top landing, desiring to collect their sentiments on the nature of human life. 'Let us be moral. 'Let us contemplate existence.' He turns his old pupil out of doors in the attitude of blessing him, and when he has discharged that social duty, sheds a few tears in the back garden. No conceivable position, action, or utterance finds him without the vice in which his being is wholly steeped and saturated. In his own house with his daughters he continues it to keep his hand in; and from the mere habit of keeping up appearances to himself falls into the trap of Jonas. Thackeray used to say that there was nothing finer in rascaldom than this ruin of Pecksniff by his son-in-law at the very moment when the oily hypocrite be-

Why no Pecksniff in France.

Why Tartuffes in England.

Homage of vice to virtue.

A favourite scene of Thackeray's.

lieves himself to be achieving his masterpiece of dissembling over the more vulgar avowed ruffian. ‘ “Jonas!” cried Mr. Pecksniff ‘ much affected, “I am not a diplomatical character; my heart ‘ “ is in my hand. By far the greater part of the inconsiderable ‘ “ savings I have accumulated in the course of—I hope—a not ‘ “ dishonourable or useless career, is already given, devised, or ‘ “ bequeathed (correct me, my dear Jonas, if I am technically ‘ “ wrong), with expressions of confidence which I will not re- ‘ “ peat; and in securities which it is unnecessary to mention; ‘ “ to a person whom I cannot, whom I will not, whom I need ‘ “ not, name.” Here he gave the hand of his son-in-law a ‘ fervent squeeze, as if he would have added, “God bless you: ‘ “ be very careful of it when you get it!” ’

LONDON: 1843-4

Pecksniff and Jonas.

Certainly Dickens thus far had done nothing of which, as in this novel, the details were filled in with such incomparable skill; where the wealth of comic circumstance was lavished in such overflowing abundance on single types of character; or where generally, as throughout the story, the intensity of his observation of individual humours and vices had taken so many varieties of imaginative form. Everything in *Chuzzlewit* indeed had grown under treatment, as will be commonly the case in the handling of a man of genius, who never knows where any given conception may lead him, out of the wealth of resource in development and incident which it has itself created. ‘As to the way,’ he wrote to me of its two most prominent figures, as soon as all their capabilities were revealed to him, ‘as to the way in which these characters ‘ have opened out, that is to me one of the most surprising ‘ processes of the mind in this sort of invention. Given what ‘ one knows, what one does not know springs up; and I am as ‘ absolutely certain of its being true, as I am of the law of ‘ gravitation—if such a thing be possible, more so.’ The remark displays exactly what in all his important characters was the very process of creation with him.

Unconscious growths.

Characters self-formed.

Nor was it in the treatment only of his present fiction, but also in its subject or design, that he had gone higher than in preceding efforts. Broadly what he aimed at, he would have expressed on the title-page if I had not dissuaded him, by printing there as its motto

London: 1843-4.

Intended motto.

a verse altered from that prologue of his own composition to which I have formerly referred: 'Your homes the scene, your-'selves the actors, here!' Debtors' prisons, parish Bumbledoms, Yorkshire schools, were vile enough, but something much more pestiferous was now the aim of his satire; and he had not before so decisively shown vigour, daring, or discernment of what lay within reach of his art, as in taking such a person as Pecksniff for the central figure in a tale of existing life. Setting him up as the glass through which to view the groups around him, we are not the less moved to a hearty detestation of the social vices they exhibit, and pre-eminently of selfishness in all its forms, because we see more plainly than ever that there is but one vice which is quite irremediable. The elder Chuzzlewits are bad enough, but they bring their self-inflicted punishments; the Jonases and Tigg Montagues are execrable, but the law has its halter and its penal servitude; the Moulds and Gamps have plague-bearing breaths, from which sanitary wisdom may clear us; but from the sleek, smiling, crawling abomination of a Pecksniff, there is no help but self-help. Every man's hand should be against him, for his is against every man; and, as Mr. Taine very wisely warns us, the virtues have most need to be careful that they do not make themselves panders to his vice. It is an amiable weakness to put the best face on the worst things, but there is none more dangerous. There is nothing so common as the mistake of Tom Pinch, and nothing so rare as his excuses.

Purpose of the satire.

Tom Pinch.

The art with which that delightful character is placed at Mr. Pecksniff's elbow at the beginning of the story, and the help he gives to set fairly afloat the falsehood he innocently believes, contribute to an excellent management of this part of the design; and the same prodigal wealth of invention and circumstance which gives its higher imaginative stamp to the book, appears as vividly in its lesser as in its leading figures. There are wonderfully suggestive touches in the household of Mould the undertaker; and in the vivid picture presented to us by one of Mrs. Gamp's recollections, we are transported to the youthful games of his children. 'The sweet creeturs! playing at berryins down in the 'shop, and follerin' the order-book to its long home in the iron

Mould the undertaker.

'safe!' The American scenes themselves are not more full of life and fun and freshness, and do not contribute more to the general hilarity, than the cockney group at Todgers's; which is itself a little world of the qualities and humours that make up the interest of human life, whether high or low, vulgar or fine, filled in with a master's hand. Here, in a mere byestroke as it were, are the finest things of the earlier books superadded to the new and higher achievement that distinguished the later productions. No part indeed of the execution of this remarkable novel is inferior. Young Bailey and Sweedlepipes are in the front rank of his humorous creations; and poor Mrs. Todgers, worn but not depraved by the cares of gravy and solicitudes of her establishment, with calculation shining out of one eye but with kindliness and goodheartedness still beaming in the other, is quite as perfect a picture in her way as even the portentous Mrs. Gamp with her grim grotesqueness, her filthy habits and foul enjoyments, her thick and damp but most amazing utterances, her moist clammy functions, her pattens, her bonnet, her bundle, and her umbrella. But such prodigious claims must have a particular mention.

LONDON: 1843-4.

The Todgers group.

Mrs. Gamp.

This world-famous personage has passed into and become one with the language, which her own parts of speech have certainly not exalted or refined. To none even of Dickens's characters has there been such a run of popularity; and she will remain among the everlasting triumphs of fiction, a superb masterpiece of English humour. What Mr. Mould says of her in his enthusiasm, that she's the sort of woman one would bury for nothing, and do it neatly too, every one feels to be an appropriate tribute; and this, by a most happy inspiration, is exactly what the genius to whom she owes her existence did, when he called her into life, to the foul original she was taken from. That which enduringly stamped upon his page its most mirth-moving figure, had stamped out of English life for ever one of its disgraces. The mortal Mrs. Gamp was handsomely put into her grave, and only the immortal Mrs. Gamp survived. Age will not wither this one, nor custom stale her variety; for here she has a special advantage over even Mr. Pecksniff himself. She has a friend, an alter ego, whose

A masterpiece of humour.

LONDON: 1843-4.

kind of service to her is expressed by her first utterance in the story; and with this, which introduces her, we may leave her most fitly. Mrs. Harris.

'"Mrs. Harris," I says, at the very last case as ever
'I acted in, which it was but a young person, "Mrs. Harris," I
'says, "leave the bottle on the chimley-piece, and don't ask me
'"to take none, but let me put my lips to it when I am so dis-
'"poged." "Mrs. Gamp," she says in answer, "if ever there
'"was a sober creetur to be got at eighteen pence a day for
'"working people, and three and six for gentlefolks—night
'"watching," said Mrs. Gamp with emphasis, "being a extra
'"charge—you are that inwallable person." "Mrs. Harris," I
'says to her, "don't name the charge, for if I could afford to lay
'"all my fellow-creeturs out for nothink, I would gladly do it,
'"sich is the love I bears 'em."' To this there is nothing to be added, except that in the person of that astonishing friend every phase of fun and comedy in the character is repeated, under fresh conditions of increased appreciation and enjoyment. By the exuberance of comic invention which gives his distinction to Mr. Pecksniff, Mrs. Gamp profits quite as much; the same wealth of laughable incident which surrounds that worthy man is upon her heaped to overflowing; but over and above this, by the additional invention of Mrs. Harris, it is all reproduced, acted over with renewed spirit, and doubled and quadrupled in her favour. This on the whole is the happiest stroke of humorous art in all the writings of Dickens.

Uses of Mrs. Gamp's friend.

Publication of *Christmas Carol.*

But this is a chapter of disappointments, and I have now to state, that as *Martin Chuzzlewit's* success was to seem to him at first only distant and problematical, so even the prodigious immediate success of the *Christmas Carol* itself was not to be an unmitigated pleasure. Never had little book an outset so full of brilliancy of promise. Published but a few days before Christmas, it was hailed on every side with enthusiastic greeting. The first edition of six thousand copies was sold the first day, and on the third of January 1844 he wrote to me that 'two thousand of the 'three printed for second and third editions are already taken by 'the trade.' But a very few weeks were to pass before the darker

side of the picture came. 'Such a night as I have passed!' he wrote to me on Saturday morning the 10th of February. 'I 'really believed I should never get up again, until I had passed 'through all the horrors of a fever. I found the *Carol* accounts 'awaiting me, and they were the cause of it. The first six 'thousand copies show a profit of £230! And the last four will 'yield as much more. I had set my heart and soul upon a 'Thousand, clear. What a wonderful thing it is, that such a great 'success should occasion me such intolerable anxiety and disap- 'pointment! My year's bills, unpaid, are so terrific, that all the 'energy and determination I can possibly exert will be required 'to clear me before I go abroad; which, if next June come and 'find me alive, I shall do. Good Heaven, if I had only taken 'heart a year ago! Do come soon, as I am very anxious to talk 'with you. We can send round to Mac after you arrive, and tell 'him to join us at Hampstead or elsewhere. I was so utterly 'knocked down last night, that I came up to the contemplation 'of all these things quite bold this morning. If I can let the 'house for this season, I will be off to some seaside place as soon 'as a tenant offers. I am not afraid, if I reduce my expenses; 'but if I do not, I shall be ruined past all mortal hope of re- 'demption.'

LONDON 1844.

Sale and accounts.

Unrealised expectations.

Confirmed resolves.

The ultimate result was that his publishers were changed, and the immediate result that his departure for Italy became a settled thing; but a word may be said on these *Carol* accounts before mention is made of his new publishing arrangements.* Want of judgment had been shown in not adjusting the expenses of production with a more equable regard to the selling price, but even as it was, before the close of the year, he had received £726 from a sale of fifteen thousand copies; and the difference between this and the amount realised by the same proportion of the sale of the successor to the *Carol*, undoubtedly justified him in the discontent now expressed. Of that second sale, as well as of the third and fourth, more than double the numbers of the *Carol* were at once sold, and of course there was no complaint of any

The *Carol* profits.

* It may interest the reader, and be something of a curiosity of literature, if I give the expenses of the first edition of 6000, and of the 7000 more which

LONDON: 1844.

Mistakes in form and price.

want of success; but the truth really was, as to all the Christmas stories issued in this form, that the price charged, while too large for the public addressed by them, was too little to remunerate their outlay; and when in later years he put forth similar fancies for Christmas, charging for them fewer pence than the shillings required for these, he counted his purchasers, with fairly corresponding gains to himself, not by tens but by hundreds of thousands. The sale of one of those pieces, five years before his death, went up in its first week to 250,000.

It was necessary now that negotiations should be resumed with

Publishers accounts:

constituted the five following editions, with the profit of the remaining 2000 which completed the sale of fifteen thousand:

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

1st Edition, 6000 No.

1843.		£	s.	d.
Dec.	Printing	74	2	9
	Paper	89	2	0
	Drawings and Engravings	49	18	0
	Two Steel Plates	1	4	0
	Printing Plates	15	17	6
	Paper for do.	7	12	0
	Colouring Plates	120	0	0
	Binding	180	0	0
	Incidents and Advertising	168	7	8
	Commission	99	4	6
		£805	8	5

2nd to the 7th Edition, making 7000 Copies.

1844.		£	s.	d.
Jan.	Printing	58	18	0
	Paper	103	19	0
	Printing Plates	17	10	0
	Paper	8	17	4
	Colouring Plates	140	0	0
	Binding	199	18	2
	Incidents and Advertising	83	5	8
	Commission	107	18	10
		£720	7	0

on sale of 15,000 copies.

Two thousand more, represented by the last item in the subjoined balance, were sold before the close of the year, leaving a remainder of 70 copies.

			£	s.	d.
1843. Dec.	Balance of a/c to Mr. Dickens's credit		186	16	7
1844. Jan. to April.	Do.	Do.	349	12	0
May to Dec.	Do.	Do.	189	11	5
	Amount of Profit on the Work		£726	0	0

his printers, but before any step was taken Messrs. Chapman and Hall were informed of his intention not to open fresh publishing relations with them after *Chuzzlewit* should have closed. Then followed deliberations and discussions, many and grave, which settled themselves at last into the form of an agreement with Messrs. Bradbury and Evans executed on the first of June 1844; by which, upon advance made to him of £2800, he assigned to them a fourth share in whatever he might write during the next ensuing eight years, to which the agreement was to be strictly limited. There were the usual protecting clauses, but no interest was to be paid, and no obligations were imposed as to what works should be written, if any, or the form of them; the only farther stipulation having reference to the event of a periodical being undertaken whereof Dickens might be only partially editor or author, in which case his proprietorship of copyright and profits was to be two thirds instead of three fourths. There was an understanding, at the time this agreement was signed, that a successor to the *Carol* would be ready for the Christmas of 1844; but no other promise was asked or made in regard to any other book, nor had he himself decided what form to give to his experiences of Italy, if he should even finally determine to publish them at all.

LONDON: 1844.

Agreement with Bradbury and Evans.

Proposed periodical and books.

Between this agreement and his journey six weeks elapsed, and there were one or two characteristic incidents before his departure: but mention must first be interposed of the success quite without alloy that also attended the little book, and carried off in excitement and delight every trace of doubt or misgiving. 'Blessings on your kind heart!' wrote Jeffrey to the author of the *Carol*. 'You should be happy yourself, for you may be sure 'you have done more good by this little publication, fostered 'more kindly feelings, and prompted more positive acts of benefi- 'cence, than can be traced to all the pulpits and confessionals in 'Christendom since Christmas 1842.' 'Who can listen,' exclaimed Thackeray, 'to objections regarding such a book as this? 'It seems to me a national benefit, and to every man or woman 'who reads it a personal kindness.' Such praise expressed what men of genius felt and said: but the small volume had other

As to the *Carol*.

Jeffrey and Thackeray.

London: 1844.

tributes, less usual and not less genuine. There poured upon its author daily, all through that Christmas time, letters from complete strangers to him which I remember reading with a wonder of pleasure; not literary at all, but of the simplest domestic kind; of which the general burden was to tell him, amid many confidences about their homes, how the *Carol* had come to be read aloud there, and was to be kept upon a little shelf by itself, and was to do them no end of good. Anything more to be said of it will not add much to this.

Letters from strangers.

Message of the little book.

There was indeed nobody that had not some interest in the message of the *Christmas Carol*. It told the selfish man to rid himself of selfishness; the just man to make himself generous; and the good-natured man to enlarge the sphere of his good nature. Its cheery voice of faith and hope, ringing from one end of the island to the other, carried pleasant warning alike to all, that if the duties of Christmas were wanting no good could come of its outward observances; that it must shine upon the cold hearth and warm it, and into the sorrowful heart and comfort it; that it must be kindness, benevolence, charity, mercy, and forbearance, or its plum pudding would turn to bile, and its roast beef be indigestible.* Nor could any man have said it with the same appropriateness as Dickens. What was marked in him to the last was manifest now. He had identified himself with Christmas fancies. Its life and spirits, its humour in riotous abundance, of right belonged to him. Its imaginations as well as its kindly thoughts, were his; and its privilege to light up with

Identified with Christmas.

* A characteristic letter of this date, which will explain itself, has been kindly sent to me by the gentleman it was written to, Mr. James Verry Staples, of Bristol:—'Third of April, '1844. I have been very much gratified by the receipt of your interesting 'letter, and I assure you that it would 'have given me heartfelt satisfaction 'to have been in your place when you 'read my little *Carol* to the Poor in 'your neighbourhood. I have great 'faith in the poor; to the best of my 'ability I always endeavour to present 'them in a favourable light to the 'rich; and I shall never cease, I hope, 'until I die, to advocate their being 'made as happy and as wise as the 'circumstances of their condition, in 'its utmost improvement, will admit 'of their becoming. I mention this 'to assure you of two things. Firstly, 'that I try to deserve their attention; 'and secondly, that any such marks 'of their approval and confidence as 'you relate to me are most acceptable to my feelings, and go at once 'to my heart.'

some sort of comfort the squalidest places, he had made his own. Christmas day was not more social or welcome: New Year's Day not more new: Twelfth Night not more full of characters. The duty of diffusing enjoyment had never been taught by a more abundant, mirthful, thoughtful, ever-seasonable writer. LONDON: 1844.

Something also is to be said of the spirit of the book, and of others like it that followed, which will not anticipate special allusions to be made hereafter. No one was more intensely fond than Dickens of old nursery tales, and he had a secret delight in feeling that he was here only giving them a higher form. The social and manly virtues he desired to teach, were to him not less the charm of the ghost, the goblin, and the fairy fancies of his childhood; however rudely set forth in those earlier days. What now were to be conquered were the more formidable dragons and giants that had their places at our own hearths, and the weapons to be used were of a finer than the 'ice-brook's temper.' With brave and strong restraints, what is evil in ourselves was to be subdued; with warm and gentle sympathies, what is bad or unreclaimed in others was to be redeemed; the Beauty was to embrace the Beast, as in the divinest of all those fables; the star was to rise out of the ashes, as in our much-loved Cinderella; and we were to play the Valentine with our wilder brothers, and bring them back with brotherly care to civilization and happiness. Nor is it to be doubted, I think, that, in that largest sense of benefit, great public and private service was done; positive, earnest, practical good; by the extraordinary popularity, and nearly universal acceptance, which attended these little holiday volumes. They carried to countless firesides, with new enjoyment of the season, better apprehension of its claims and obligations; they mingled grave with glad thoughts, much to the advantage of both; what seemed almost too remote to meddle with they brought within reach of the charities, and what was near they touched with a dearer tenderness; they comforted the generous, rebuked the sordid, cured folly by kindly ridicule and comic humour, and, saying to their readers *Thus you have done, but it were better Thus*, may for some have realised the philosopher's famous experience, and by a single fortunate thought revised the

Old nursery tales in higher form.

New faces to familiar friends.

Something better than literature.

London: 1844.

whole manner of a life. Literary criticism here is a second-rate thing, and the reader may be spared such discoveries as it might have made in regard to the *Christmas Carol*.

III.

YEAR OF DEPARTURE FOR ITALY.

1844.

And now, before accompanying Dickens on his Italian travel, one or two parting incidents will receive illustration from his letters. A thoughtful little poem written during the past summer for Lady Blessington has been quoted on a previous page: and it may remind me to say here what warmth of regard he had for her, and for all the inmates of Gore-house; how uninterruptedly joyous and pleasurable were his associations with them; and what valued help they now gave in his preparations for Italy. The poem, as we have seen, was written during a visit made in Yorkshire to the house of Mr. Smithson, already named as the partner of his early companion, Mr. Mitton; and this visit he repeated in sadder circumstances during the present year, when (April 1844) he attended Mr. Smithson's funeral. With members or connections of the family of this friend, his intercourse long continued.

Gore-house.

In the previous February, on the 26th and 28th respectively, he had taken the chair at two great meetings, in Liverpool of the Mechanics' Institution, and in Birmingham of the Polytechnic Institution, to which reference is made by him in a letter of the 21st. I quote the allusion because it shows thus early the sensitive regard to his position as a man of letters, and his scrupulous consideration for the feelings as well as interest of the class, which he manifested in many various and often greatly self-sacrificing ways all through his life. 'Advise me on the following point. 'And as I must write to-night, having already lost a post, advise 'me by bearer. This Liverpool Institution, which is wealthy and 'has a high grammar-school the masters of which receive in

Liverpool and Birmingham Institutes.

A question of receiving payment

'salaries upwards of £2000 a year (indeed its extent horrifies 'me; I am struggling through its papers this morning), writes me 'yesterday by its secretary a business letter about the order of 'the proceedings on Monday; and it begins thus. "I beg to '"send you prefixed, with the best respects of our committee, a '"bank order for twenty pounds in payment of the expenses '"contingent on your visit to Liverpool."—And there, sure 'enough, it is. Now my impulse was, *and is*, decidedly to 'return it. Twenty pounds is not of moment to me; and any 'sacrifice of independence is worth it twenty times' twenty times 'told. But haggling in my mind is a doubt whether that would 'be proper, and not boastful (in an inexplicable way); and 'whether as an author, I have a right to put myself on a basis 'which the professors of literature in other forms *connected with* '*the Institution* cannot afford to occupy. Don't you see? But 'of course you do. The case stands thus. The Manchester 'Institution, being in debt, appeals to me as it were *in formâ* '*pauperis*, and makes no such provision as I have named. The 'Birmingham Institution, just struggling into life with great 'difficulty, applies to me on the same grounds. But the Leeds 'people (thriving) write to me, making the expenses a distinct 'matter of business; and the Liverpool, as a point of delicacy, 'say nothing about it to the last minute, and then send the 'money. Now, what in the name of goodness ought I to do?— 'I am as much puzzled with the cheque as Colonel Jack was 'with his gold. If it would have settled the matter to put it in 'the fire yesterday, I should certainly have done it. Your opinion 'is requested. I think I shall have grounds for a very good 'speech at Brummagem; but I am not sure about Liverpool: 'having misgivings of over-gentility.' My opinion was clearly for sending the money back, which accordingly was done.

LONDON: 1844.

Sensitive for his calling.

A troublesome cheque.

Both speeches, duly delivered to enthusiastic listeners at the places named, were good, and both, with suitable variations, had the same theme: telling his popular audience in Birmingham that the principle of their institute, education comprehensive and unsectarian, was the only safe one, for that without danger no society could go on punishing men for preferring vice to virtue

Education speeches.

London: 1844. without giving them the means of knowing what virtue was; and reminding his genteeler audience in Liverpool, that if happily they had been themselves well taught, so much the more should they seek to extend the benefit to all, since, whatever the precedence due to rank, wealth, or intellect, there was yet a nobility beyond them, expressed unaffectedly by the poet's verse and in the power of education to confer.

> Howe'er it be, it seems to me,
> 'Tis only noble to be good:
> True hearts are more than coronets,
> And simple faith than Norman blood.

Carol at the Adelphi.

He underwent some suffering, which he might have spared himself, at his return. 'I saw the *Carol* last night,' he wrote to me of a dramatic performance of the little story at the Adelphi. 'Better than usual, and Wright seems to enjoy Bob Cratchit, but '*heart-breaking*' to me. Oh Heaven! if any forecast of *this* was 'ever in my mind! Yet O. Smith was drearily better than I 'expected. It is a great comfort to have that kind of meat under 'done; and his face is quite perfect.' Of what he suffered from these adaptations of his books, multiplied remorselessly at every theatre, I have foreborne to speak, but it was the subject of complaint with him incessantly; and more or less satisfied as he was with individual performances, such as Mr. Yates's Quilp or Mantalini and Mrs. Keeley's Smike or Dot, there was only one, that of Barnaby Rudge by the Miss Fortescue who became afterwards Lady Gardner, on which I ever heard him dwell with a thorough liking. It is true that to the dramatizations of his next and other following Christmas stories he gave help himself; but, even then, all such efforts to assist special representations were mere attempts to render more tolerable what he had no power to prevent, and, with a few rare exceptions, they were never very successful. Another and graver wrong was the piracy of his writings, every one of which had been reproduced with merely such colourable changes of title, incidents, and names of characters, as were believed to be sufficient to evade the law and adapt them to 'penny' purchasers. So shamelessly had this been going on

Sufferings from stage adaptations.

Wrongs from piracy.

ever since the days of *Pickwick*, in so many outrageous ways* and with all but impunity, that a course repeatedly urged by Talfourd and myself was at last taken in the present year with the *Christmas Carol* and the *Chuzzlewit* pirates. Upon a case of such peculiar flagrancy, however, that the vice-chancellor would not even hear Dickens's counsel; and what it cost our dear friend Talfourd to suppress his speech exceeded by very much the labour and pains with which he had prepared it. 'The 'pirates,' wrote Dickens to me, after leaving the court on the 18th of January, 'are beaten flat. They are bruised, bloody, battered, 'smashed, squelched, and utterly undone. Knight Bruce would 'not hear Talfourd, but instantly gave judgment. He had inter- 'rupted Anderton constantly by asking him to produce a passage 'which was not an expanded or contracted idea from my book. 'And at every successive passage he cried out, "That is Mr. '"Dickens's case. Find another!" He said that there was not a 'shadow of doubt upon the matter. That there was no authority 'which would bear a construction in their favour; the piracy 'going beyond all previous instances. They might mention it 'again in a week, he said, if they liked, and might have an issue 'if they pleased; but they would probably consider it unnecessary 'after that strong expression of his opinion. Of course I will 'stand by what we have agreed as to the only terms of com- 'promise with the printers. I am determined that I will have an 'apology for their affidavits. The other men may pay their costs 'and get out of it, but I will stick to my friend the author.' Two days later he wrote: 'The farther affidavits put in by way of 'extenuation by the printing rascals *are* rather strong, and give 'one a pretty correct idea of what the men must be who hold on 'by the heels of literature. Oh! the agony of Talfourd at 'Knight Bruce's not hearing him! He had sat up till three in

LONDON: 1844.

Proceedings in Chancery.

Judge and counsel.

End of suit.

Hangers-on of literature.

* In a letter on the subject of copyright published by Thomas Hood after Dickens's return from America, he described what had passed between himself and one of these pirates who had issued a Master Humphrey's Clock edited by Bos. 'Sir,' said the man to Hood, 'if you had observed the 'name, it was *Bos*, not *Boz*; s, sir, 'not z; and, besides, it would have 'been no piracy, sir, even with the z, 'because *Master Humphrey's Clock*, 'you see, sir, was not published as by 'Boz, but by Charles Dickens!'

London: 1844.

'the morning, he says, preparing his speech; and would have 'done all kinds of things with the affidavits. It certainly was a 'splendid subject. We have heard nothing from the vagabonds 'yet. I once thought of printing the affidavits without a word of 'comment, and sewing them up with *Chuzzlewit*. Talfourd is 'strongly disinclined to compromise with the printers on any 'terms. In which case it would be referred to the master to 'ascertain what profits had been made by the piracy, and to order 'the same to be paid to me. But wear and tear of law is my 'consideration.' The undertaking to which he had at last to submit was, that upon ample public apology, and payment of all costs, the offenders should be let go: but the real result was that, after infinite vexation and trouble, he had himself to pay all the costs incurred on his own behalf; and, a couple of years later, upon repetition of the wrong he had suffered in so gross a form that proceedings were again advised by Talfourd and others, he wrote to me from Switzerland the condition of mind to which his experience had brought him. 'My feeling about the —— is the 'feeling common, I suppose, to three fourths of the reflecting 'part of the community in our happiest of all possible countries; 'and that is, that it is better to suffer a great wrong than to have 'recourse to the much greater wrong of the law. I shall not 'easily forget the expense, and anxiety, and horrible injustice of 'the *Carol* case, wherein, in asserting the plainest right on earth, 'I was really treated as if I were the robber instead of the robbed. 'Upon the whole, I certainly would much rather NOT proceed. 'What do you think of sending in a grave protest against what 'has been done in this case, on account of the immense amount 'of piracy to which I am daily exposed, and because I have been 'already met in the court of chancery with the legal doctrine that 'silence under such wrongs barred my remedy: to which Tal-'fourd's written opinion might be appended as proof that we 'stopped under no discouragement. It is useless to affect that I 'don't know I have a morbid susceptibility of exasperation, to 'which the meanness and badness of the law in such a matter 'would be stinging in the last degree. And I know of no-'thing that *could* come, even of a successful action, which

Wear and tear of law.

Result of Chancery experience:

piracy preferred.

'would be worth the mental trouble and disturbance it would 'cost.'* LONDON: 1844.

A few notes of besetting temptations during his busiest days at *Chuzzlewit*, one taken from each of the first four months of the year when he was working at its masterly closing scenes, will amusingly exhibit, side by side, his powers of resistance and capacities of enjoyment. 'I had written you a line' (16th of January), 'pleading Jonas and Mrs. Gamp, but this frosty day 'tempts me sorely. I am distractingly late; but I look at the sky, 'think of Hampstead, and feel hideously tempted. Don't come 'with Mac, and fetch me. I couldn't resist if you did.' In the next (18th of February), he is not the tempted, but the tempter. 'Stan-'field and Mac have come in, and we are going to Hampstead

Reliefs to work.

The tempted.

* The reader may be amused if I add in a note what he said of the pirates in those earlier days when grave matters touched him less gravely. On the eve of the first number of *Nickleby* he had issued a proclamation. 'Whereas we are the only true and 'lawful Boz. And whereas it hath 'been reported to us, who are com-'mencing a new work, that some 'dishonest dullards resident in the 'by-streets and cellars of this town 'impose upon the unwary and cre-'dulous, by producing cheap and 'wretched imitations of our delectable 'works. And whereas we derive but 'small comfort under this injury from 'the knowledge that the dishonest 'dullards aforesaid cannot, by reason 'of their mental smallness, follow near 'our heels, but are constrained to 'creep along by dirty and little-'frequented ways, at a most respectful 'and humble distance behind. And 'whereas, in like manner, as some 'other vermin are not worth the kill-'ing for the sake of their carcases, so 'these kennel pirates are not worth 'the powder and shot of the law, in-'asmuch as whatever damages they 'may commit they are in no condition 'to pay any. This is to give notice, 'that we have at length devised a 'mode of execution for them, so sum-'mary and terrible, that if any gang or 'gangs thereof presume to hoist but 'one shred of the colours of the good 'ship *Nickleby*, we will hang them on 'gibbets so lofty and enduring that 'their remains shall be a monument 'of our just vengeance to all succeed-'ing ages; and it shall not lie in the 'power of any lord high admiral, on 'earth, to cause them to be taken 'down again.' The last paragraph of the proclamation informed the potentates of Paternoster-row, that from the then ensuing day of the thirtieth of March, until farther notice, 'we shall 'hold our Levees, as heretofore, on 'the last evening but one of every 'month, between the hours of seven 'and nine, at our Board of Trade, 'number one hundred and eighty-six 'in the Strand, London; where we 'again request the attendance (in vast 'crowds) of their accredited agents 'and ambassadors. Gentlemen to 'wear knots upon their shoulders; 'and patent cabs to draw up with 'their doors towards the grand en-'trance, for the convenience of load-'ing.'

Proclamation on the eve of *Nickleby*.

'to dinner. I leave Betsey Prig as you know, so don't you make 'a scruple about leaving Mrs. Harris. We shall stroll leisurely 'up, to give you time to join us, and dinner will be on the table 'at Jack Straw's at four.... In the very improbable (surely im-'possible?) case of your not coming, we will call on you at a 'quarter before eight, to go to the ragged school.' The next (5th of March) shows him in yielding mood, and pitying himself for his infirmity of compliance. 'Sir, I will—he—he—he—he—'he—he—I will NOT eat with you, either at your own house or 'the club. But the morning looks bright, and a walk to Hamp-'stead would suit me marvellously. If you should present your-'self at my gate (bringing the R. A.'s along with you) I shall not 'be sapparized. So no more at this writing from poor MR. 'DICKENS.' But again the tables are turned, and he is tempter in the last; written on that Shakespeare day (23rd of April) which we kept always as a festival, and signed in character expressive of his then present unfitness for any of the practical affairs of life, including the very pressing business which at the moment ought to have occupied him, namely, attention to the long deferred nuptials of Miss Charity Pecksniff. 'November 'blasts! Why it's the warmest, most genial, most intensely bland, 'delicious, growing, springy, songster-of-the-grovy, bursting-forth-'of-the-buddy, day as ever was. At half-past four I shall expect 'you. Ever, MODDLE.'

A favourite bit of humour:

Moddle, the sentimental noodle hooked by Miss Pecksniff who flies on his proposed wedding-day from the frightful prospect before him, the reader of course knows; and has perhaps admired for his last superb outbreak of common sense. It was a rather favourite bit of humour with Dickens; and I find it pleasant to think that he never saw the description given of it by a trained and skilful French critic, who has been able to pass under his review the whole of English literature without any apparent sense or understanding of one of its most important as well as richest elements. A man without the perception of humour taking English prose literature in hand, can of course set about it only in one way. Accordingly, in Mr. Taine's decisive judgments of our last great humourist, which proceed upon a principle of psycho-

criticized without humour.

logical analysis which it is only fair to say he applies impartially to everybody, *Pickwick*, *Oliver Twist*, and *The Old Curiosity Shop* are not in any manner even named or alluded to; Mrs. Gamp is only once mentioned as always talking of Mrs. Harris, and Mr. Micawber also only once as using always the same emphatic phrases; the largest extracts are taken from the two books in all the Dickens series that are weakest on the humorous side, *Hard Times* and the *Chimes*; *Nickleby*, with its many laughter-moving figures, is dismissed in a line and a half; Mr. Toots, Captain Cuttle, Susan Nipper, Toodles, and the rest have no place in what is said of *Dombey*; and, to close with what has caused and must excuse my digression, Mr. Augustus Moddle is introduced as a gloomy maniac who makes us laugh and makes us shudder, and as drawn so truly for a madman, that though at first sight agreeable he is in reality horrible! * LONDON: 1844. Moddle as a maniac.

A month before the letter subscribed by Dickens in the character, so happily unknown to himself, of this gloomy maniac, he had written to me from amidst his famous chapter in which the tables are turned on Pecksniff; but here I quote the letter chiefly for noticeable words at its close. 'I heard from Macready by the 'Hibernia. I have been slaving away regularly, but the weather 'is against rapid progress. I altered the verbal error, and sub-'stituted for the action you didn't like some words expressive of 'the hurry of the scene. Macready sums up slavery in New Macready in New Orleans.

* This might seem not very credible if I did not give the passage literally, and I therefore quote it from the careful translation of *Taine's History of English Literature* by Mr. Van Laun, one of the masters of the Edinburgh Academy, where I will venture to hope that other authorities on English Literature are at the same time admitted. 'Jonas' (also in *Chuzzlewit*) 'is on 'the verge of madness. There are 'other characters quite mad. Dickens 'has drawn three or four portraits of 'madmen, very agreeable at first sight, 'but so true that they are in reality hor-'rible. It needed an imagination like 'his, irregular, excessive, capable of 'fixed ideas, to exhibit the derange-'ments of reason. Two especially 'there are, which make us laugh, and 'which make us shudder. Augustus, 'the gloomy maniac, who is on the 'point of marrying Miss Pecksniff; 'and poor Mr. Dick, half an idiot, 'half a monomaniac, who lives with 'Miss Trotwood. . . . The play of 'these shattered reasons is like the 'creaking of a dislocated door; it 'makes one sick to hear it.' (Vol. ii. p. 346.) The original was published before Dickens's death, but he certainly never saw it. Taine on English literature.

London: 1844.

'Orleans in the way of a gentle doubting on the subject, by a '"but" and a dash. I believe it is in New Orleans that the man 'is lying under sentence of death, who, not having the fear of 'God before his eyes, did not deliver up a captive slave to the 'torture? The largest gun in that country has not burst yet— '*but it will.* Heaven help us, too, from explosions nearer home! 'I declare I never go into what is called "society" that I am not 'aweary of it, despise it, hate it, and reject it. The more I see of 'its extraordinary conceit, and its stupendous ignorance of what 'is passing out of doors, the more certain I am that it is ap- 'proaching the period when, being incapable of reforming itself, 'it will have to submit to be reformed by others off the face of 'the earth.' Thus we see that the old radical leanings were again rather strong in him at present, and I may add that he had found occasional recent vent for them by writing in the *Morning Chronicle.*

Slavery in America.

Writing in the *Chronicle.*

Some articles thus contributed by him having set people talking, the proprietors of the paper rather eagerly mooted the question what payment he would ask for contributing regularly; and ten guineas an article was named. Very sensibly, however, the editor who had succeeded his old friend Black pointed out to him, that though even that sum would not be refused in the heat of the successful articles just contributed, yet (I quote his own account in a letter of the 7th of March 1844) so much would hardly be paid continuously; and thereupon an understanding was come to, that he would write as a volunteer and leave his payment to be adjusted to the results. 'Then said the editor— 'and this I particularly want you to turn over in your mind, at 'leisure—supposing me to go abroad, could I contemplate such a 'thing as the writing of a letter a week under any signature I 'chose, with such scraps of descriptions and impressions as sug- 'gested themselves to my mind? If so, would I do it for the '*Chronicle?* And if so again, what would I do it for? He 'thought for such contributions Easthope would pay anything. I 'told him that the idea had never occurred to me; but that I was 'afraid he did not know what the value of such contributions 'would be. He repeated what he had said before; and I

Conference with its new editor.

'promised to consider whether I could reconcile it to myself to 'write such letters at all. The pros and cons need to be very 'carefully weighed. I will not tell you to which side I incline, 'but if we should disagree, or waver on the same points, we will 'call Bradbury and Evans to the council. I think it more than 'probable that we shall be of exactly the same mind, but I want 'you to be in possession of the facts and therefore send you this 'rigmarole.' The rigmarole is not unimportant; because, though we did not differ on the wisdom of saying No to the *Chronicle*, the 'council' spoken of was nevertheless held, and in it lay the germ of another newspaper enterprise he permitted himself to engage in twelve months later, to which he would have done more wisely to have also answered No.

LONDON: 1844.

Doubts as to newspaper writing.

The preparation for departure was now actively going forward, and especially his inquiries for two important adjuncts thereto, a courier and a carriage. As to the latter it occurred to him that he might perhaps get for little money 'some good old shabby 'devil of a coach—one of those vast phantoms that hide them-'selves in a corner of the Pantechnicon;' and exactly such a one he found there; sitting himself inside it, a perfect Sentimental Traveller, while the managing man told him its history. 'As for 'comfort—let me see—it is about the size of your library; with 'night-lamps and day-lamps and pockets and imperials and 'leathern cellars, and the most extraordinary contrivances. Joking 'apart, it is a wonderful machine. And when you see it (if you '*do* see it) you will roar at it first, and will then proclaim it 'to be "perfectly brilliant, my dear fellow."' It was marked sixty pounds; he got it for five-and-forty; and my own emotions respecting it he had described by anticipation quite correctly. In finding a courier he was even more fortunate; and these successes were followed by a third apparently very promising, but in the result less satisfactory. His house was let to not very careful people.

Travelling carriage.

Courier.

The tenant having offered herself for Devonshire-terrace unexpectedly, during the last week or two of his stay in England he went into temporary quarters in Osnaburgh-terrace; and here a domestic difficulty befell of which the mention may be amusing,

In temporary quarters.

London: 1844.

when I have disposed of an incident that preceded it too characteristic for omission. The Mendicity Society's officers had caught a notorious begging-letter writer, had identified him as an old offender against Dickens of which proofs were found on his person, and had put matters in train for his proper punishment; when the wretched creature's wife made such appeal before the case was heard at the police-court, that Dickens broke down in his character of prosecutor, and at the last moment, finding what was said of the man's distress at the time to be true, relented. 'When 'the Mendicity officers themselves told me the man was in dis- 'tress, I desired them to suppress what they knew about him, and 'slipped out of the bundle (in the police office) his first letter, 'which was the greatest lie of all. For he looked wretched, and 'his wife had been waiting about the street to see me, all the 'morning. It was an exceedingly bad case however, and the 'imposition, all through, very great indeed. Insomuch that I 'could not *say* anything in his favour, even when I saw him. 'Yet I was not sorry that the creature found the loophole for 'escape. The officers had taken him illegally without any 'warrant; and really they messed it all through, quite facetiously.'

Begging-letter case.

He will himself also best relate the small domestic difficulty into which he fell in his temporary dwelling, upon his unexpectedly discovering it to be unequal to the strain of a dinner party for which invitations had gone out just before the sudden 'let' of Devonshire-terrace. The letter is characteristic in other ways, or I should hardly have gone so far into domesticities here; and it enables me to add that with the last on its list of guests, Mr. Thomas Chapman the chairman of Lloyd's, he held frequent kindly intercourse, and that few things more absurd or unfounded have been invented, even of Dickens, than that he found any part of the original of Mr. Dombey in the nature, the appearance, or the manners of this excellent and much valued friend. 'Advise, 'advise,' he wrote (9 Osnaburgh-terrace, 28th of May 1844), 'advise with a distracted man. Investigation below stairs 'renders it, as my father would say, "manifest to any person '"of ordinary intelligence, if the term may be considered '"allowable," that the Saturday's dinner cannot come off here

A family difficulty.

Mr. Thomas Chapman.

'with safety. It would be a toss-up, and might come down 'heads, but it would put us into an agony with that kind of 'people . . Now, I feel a difficulty in dropping it altogether, and 'really fear that this might have an indefinably suspicious and odd appearance. Then said I at breakfast this morning, I'll 'send down to the Clarendon. Then says Kate, have it at 'Richmond. Then I say, that might be inconvenient to the 'people. Then she says, how could it be if we dine late 'enough? Then I am very much offended without exactly 'knowing why; and come up here, in a state of hopeless mystifi-'cation . . What do you think? Ellis would be quite as dear as 'anybody else; and unless the weather changes, the place is 'objectionable. I must make up my mind to do one thing or 'other, for we shall meet Lord Denman at dinner to-day. Could 'it be dropped decently? That, I think very doubtful. Could it 'be done for a couple of guineas apiece at the Clarendon? . . In 'a matter of more importance I could make up my mind. But in 'a matter of this kind I bother and bewilder myself, and come to 'no conclusion whatever. Advise! Advise! . . List of the In-'vited. There's Lord Normanby. And there's Lord Denman. 'There's Easthope, wife, and sister. There's Sydney Smith. 'There's you and Mac. There's Babbage. There's a Lady 'Osborne and her daughter. There's Southwood Smith. And 'there's Quin. And there are Thomas Chapman and his wife. 'So many of these people have never dined with us, that the 'fix is particularly tight. Advise! Advise!' My advice was for throwing over the party altogether, but additional help was obtained and the dinner went off very pleasantly. It was the last time we saw Sydney Smith.

LONDON: 1844.

A farewell dinner party.

Bothered and bewildered.

Of one other characteristic occurrence he wrote before he left; and the very legible epigraph round the seal of his letter, 'It is 'particularly requested that if Sir James Graham should open this, 'he will not trouble himself to seal it again,' expresses both its date and its writer's opinion of a notorious transaction of the time. 'I wish' (28th of June) 'you would read this, and give it 'me again when we meet at Stanfield's to-day. Newby has 'written to me to say that he hopes to be able to give Overs more

Letter-opening.

'Evenings of a Working-man.'

LONDON: 1844.

'money than was agreed on.' The enclosure was the proof-sheet of a preface written by him to a small collection of stories by a poor carpenter dying of consumption, who hoped by their publication, under protection of such a name, to leave behind him some small provision for his ailing wife and little children.* The book was dedicated to the kind physician, Doctor Elliotson, whose name was for nearly thirty years a synonym with us all for unwearied, self-sacrificing, beneficent service to every one in need.

Doctor Elliotson.

The last incident before Dickens's departure was a farewell dinner to him at Greenwich, which took also the form of a celebration for the completion of *Chuzzlewit*, or, as the Ballantynes used to call it in Scott's case, a christening dinner; when Lord Normanby took the chair, and I remember sitting next the great painter Turner, who had come with Stanfield, and had enveloped his throat, that sultry summer day, in a huge red belcher-handkerchief which nothing would induce him to remove. He was not otherwise demonstrative, but enjoyed himself in a quiet silent way, less perhaps at the speeches than at the changing lights on the river. Carlyle did not come; telling me in his reply to the invitation that he truly loved Dickens, having discerned in the inner man of him a real music of the genuine kind, but that he'd rather testify to this in some other form than that of dining out in the dogdays.

Greenwich dinner.

Turner and Carlyle.

* He wrote from Marseilles (17th Dec. 1844). 'When poor Overs was 'dying he suddenly asked for a pen and 'ink and some paper, and made up a 'little parcel for me which it was his 'last conscious act to direct. She (his 'wife) told me this and gave it me. I 'opened it last night. It was a copy 'of his little book in which he had 'written my name, "With his devo-'"tion." I thought it simple and affect-'ing of the poor fellow.' From a later letter a few lines may be added. 'Mrs. Overs tells me' (Monte Vacchi, 30th March, 1845) 'that Miss Coutts 'has sent her, at different times, six-'teen pounds, has sent a doctor to her 'children, and has got one of the girls 'into the Orphan School. When I 'wrote her a word in the poor woman's 'behalf, she wrote me back to the 'effect that it was a kindness to her-'self to have done so, "for what is 'the use of my means but to try and 'do some good with them?"'

IV.

IDLENESS AT ALBARO: VILLA BAGNERELLO.

1844.

THE travelling party arrived at Marseilles on the evening of Sunday the 14th of July. Not being able to get vetturino horses in Paris, they had come on, post; paying for nine horses but bringing only four, and thereby saving a shilling a mile out of what the four would have cost in England. So great thus far, however, had been the cost of travel, that 'what with distance, 'caravan, sight-seeing, and everything,' two hundred pounds would be nearly swallowed up before they were at their destination. The success otherwise had been complete. The children had not cried in their worst troubles, the carriage had gone lightly over abominable roads, and the courier had proved himself a perfect gem. 'Surrounded by strange and perfectly novel circumstances,' Dickens wrote to me from Marseilles, 'I feel as if I had a new 'head on side by side with my old one.'

MARSEILLES: 1844.

The travel.

New experiences

To what shrewd and kindly observation the old one had helped him at every stage of his journey, his published book of travel tells, and of all that there will be nothing here; but a couple of experiences at his outset, of which he told me afterwards, have enough character in them to be worth mention.

Shortly before there had been some public interest about the captain of a Boulogne steamer apprehended on a suspicion of having stolen specie, but reinstated by his owners after a public apology to him on their behalf; and Dickens had hardly set foot on the boat that was to carry them across, when he was attracted by the look of its captain, and discovered him after a minutes' talk to be that very man. 'Such an honest, simple, good fellow, 'I never saw,' said Dickens, as he imitated for me the homely speech in which his confidences were related. The Boulogne people, he said, had given him a piece of plate, 'but Lord bless 'us! it took a deal more than that to get him round again in his

Honesty under cloud.

Marseilles: 1844.

'own mind; and for weeks and weeks he was uncommon low to 'be sure. Newgate, you see! What a place for a sea-faring 'man as had held up his head afore the best on 'em, and had 'more friends, I mean to say, and I do tell you the daylight 'truth, than any man on this station—ah! or any other, I don't 'care where!'

French thrown away.

His first experience in a foreign tongue he made immediately on landing, when he had gone to the bank for money, and after delivering with most laborious distinctness a rather long address in French to the clerk behind the counter, was disconcerted by that functionary's cool enquiry in the native-born Lombard-street manner, 'How would you like to take it, sir?' He took it, as everybody must, in five-franc pieces, and a most inconvenient coinage he found it; for he required so much that he had to carry it in a couple of small sacks, and was always 'turning hot 'about suddenly' taking it into his head that he had lost them.

Villa taken for him.

The evening of Tuesday the 16th of July saw him in a villa at Albaro, the suburb of Genoa in which, upon the advice of our Gore-house friends, he had resolved to pass the summer months before taking up his quarters in the city. His wish was to have had Lord Byron's house there, but it had fallen into neglect and become the refuge of a third-rate wineshop. The matter had then been left to Angus Fletcher who just now lived near Genoa, and he had taken at a rent absurdly above its value*

House he might have had.

* He regretted one chance missed by his eccentric friend, which he described to me just before he left Italy. 'I saw last night an old palazzo of 'the Doria, six miles from here, upon 'the sea, which De la Rue urged 'Fletcher to take for us, when he was 'bent on that detestable villa Bagne-'rello; which villa the Genoese have 'hired, time out of mind, for one-'fourth of what I paid, as they told 'him again and again before he made 'the agreement. This is one of the 'strangest old palaces in Italy, sur-'rounded by beautiful *woods* of great 'trees (an immense rarity here) some 'miles in extent: and has upon the 'terrace a high tower, formerly a prison 'for offenders against the family, and 'a defence against the pirates. The 'present Doria lets it as it stands for '£40 English—for the year. . . . And 'the grounds are no expense; being 'proudly maintained by the Doria, 'who spends this rent, when he gets 'it, in repairing the roof and windows. 'It is a wonderful house; full of the 'most unaccountable pictures and most 'incredible furniture: every room in 'it like the most quaint and fanciful 'of Cattermole's pictures; and how 'many rooms I am afraid to say.' 2nd of June, 1845.

an unpicturesque and uninteresting dwelling, which at once impressed its new tenant with its likeness to a pink jail. 'It is,' he said to me, 'the most perfectly lonely, rusty, stagnant old stag-'gerer of a domain that you can possibly imagine. What would 'I give if you could only look round the courtyard! *I* look down 'into it, whenever I am near that side of the house, for the stable 'is so full of "vermin and swarmers" (pardon the quotation from 'my inimitable friend) that I always expect to see the carriage 'going out bodily, with legions of industrious fleas harnessed to 'and drawing it off, on their own account. We have a couple of 'Italian work-people in our establishment; and to hear one or 'other of them talking away to our servants with the utmost 'violence and volubility in Genoese, and our servants answering 'with great fluency in English (very loud: as if the others were 'only deaf, not Italian), is one of the most ridiculous things pos-'sible. The effect is greatly enhanced by the Genoese manner, 'which is exceedingly animated and pantomimic; so that two 'friends of the lower class conversing pleasantly in the street, 'always seem on the eve of stabbing each other forthwith. And 'a stranger is immensely astonished at their not doing it.'

ALBARO: 1844.

Italian and English.

The heat tried him less than he expected, excepting always the sirocco, which, near the sea as they were, and right in the course of the wind as it blew against the house, made everything hotter than if there had been no wind. 'One feels it most, on first 'getting up. Then, it is really so oppressive that a strong deter-'mination is necessary to enable one to go on dressing; one's 'tendency being to tumble down anywhere and lie there.' It seemed to hit him, he said, behind the knee, and make his legs so shake that he could not walk or stand. He had unfortunately a whole week of this without intermission, soon after his arrival; but then came a storm, with wind from the mountains; and he could bear the ordinary heat very well. What at first had been a home-discomfort, the bare walls, lofty ceilings, icy floors, and lattice blinds, soon became agreeable; there were regular afternoon breezes from the sea; in his courtyard was a well of very pure and very cold water; there were new milk and eggs by the bucketful, and, to protect from the summer insects

Sirocco.

Country pleasures.

Albaro: 1844. — — these and other dainties, there were fresh vine-leaves by the thousand; and he satisfied himself, by the experience of a day or two in the city, that he had done well to come first to its suburb by the sea. What startled and disappointed him most were the frequent cloudy days.* He opened his third letter (3rd of August) by telling me there was a thick November fog, that rain was pouring incessantly, and that he did not remember to have seen in his life, at that time of year, such cloudy weather as he had seen beneath Italian skies.

Cloudy weather.

'The story goes that it is in autumn and winter, when other 'countries are dark and foggy, that the beauty and clearness of 'this are most observable. I hope it may prove so; for I have 'postponed going round the hills which encircle the city, or seeing 'any of the sights, until the weather is more favourable.† I have 'never yet seen it so clear, for any long time of the day together, 'as on a bright, lark-singing, coast-of-France-discerning day at 'Broadstairs; nor have I ever seen so fine a sunset, *throughout*, 'as is very common there. But the scenery is exquisite, and at 'certain periods of the evening and the morning the blue of the 'Mediterranean surpasses all conception or description. It is 'the most intense and wonderful colour, I do believe, in all 'nature.'

Sunsets and scenery.

In his second letter from Albaro there was more of this subject;

* 'We have had a London sky un-'til to-day,' he wrote on the 20th of July, 'grey and cloudy as you please: 'but I am most disappointed, I think, 'in the evenings, which are as com-'monplace as need be; for there is no 'twilight, and as to the stars giving 'more light here than elsewhere, that 'is humbug.' The summer of 1844 seems to have been, however, an unusually stormy and wet season. He wrote to me on the 21st or October that they had had, so far, only four really clear days since they came to Italy.

† 'My faith on that point is de-'cidedly shaken, which reminds me 'to ask you whether you ever read 'Simond's Tour in Italy. It is a 'most charming book, and eminently 'remarkable for its excellent sense, 'and determination not to give in to 'conventional lies.' In a later letter he says: 'None of the books are un-'affected and true but Simond's, which 'charms me more and more by its 'boldness, and its frank exhibition of 'that rare and admirable quality which 'enables a man to form opinions for 'himself without a miserable and 'slavish reference to the pretended 'opinions of other people. His notices 'of the leading pictures enchant me. 'They are so perfectly just and faith-'ful, and so whimsically shrewd.' Rome, 9th of March, 1845.

Simond's *Tour in Italy.*

and an outbreak of whimsical enthusiasm in it, meant especially for Maclise, is followed by some capital description. 'I address 'you, my friend,' he wrote, 'with something of the lofty spirit of 'an exile, a banished commoner, a sort of Anglo-Pole. I don't 'exactly know what I have done for my country in coming away 'from it, but I feel it is something; something great; something 'virtuous and heroic. Lofty emotions rise within me, when I see 'the sun set on the blue Mediterranean. I am the limpet on the 'rock: my father's name is Turner, and my boots are green . . . 'Apropos of blue. In a certain picture called the Serenade for 'which Browning wrote that verse * in Lincoln's-inn-fields, you, 'O Mac, painted a sky. If you ever have occasion to paint the 'Mediterranean, let it be exactly of that colour. It lies before 'me now, as deeply and intensely blue. But no such colour is 'above me. Nothing like it. In the south of France, at Avignon, 'at Aix, at Marseilles, I saw deep blue skies; and also in 'America. But the sky above me is familiar to my sight. Is it 'heresy to say that I have seen its twin brother shining through 'the window of Jack Straw's? that down in Devonshire-terrace I 'have seen a better sky? I dare say it is; but like a great many 'other heresies, it is true . . . But such green, green, green, as 'flutters in the vineyard down below the windows, *that* I never 'saw; nor yet such lilac and such purple as float between me and 'the distant hills; nor yet in anything, picture, book, or vestal 'boredom, such awful, solemn, impenetrable blue, as in that same 'sea. It has such an absorbing, silent, deep, profound effect, 'that I can't help thinking it suggested the idea of Styx. It 'looks as if a draught of it, only so much as you could scoop up 'on the beach in the hollow of your hand, would wash out every-'thing else, and make a great blue blank of your intellect . . .

ALBARO: 1844.

Address to Maclise.

Turner's 'Exile and 'Rock 'Limpet.'

French and Italian skies.

The Mediterranean.

* I send my heart up to thee, all my heart
In this my singing!
For the stars help me, and the sea bears part;
The very night is clinging
Closer to Venice' streets to leave one space
Above me, whence thy face
May light my joyous heart to thee its dwelling-place.

Written to express Maclise's subject in the Academy catalogue.

ALBARO: 1844.

Sun upon the sea.

'When the sun sets clearly, then, by Heaven, it is majestic. 'From any one of eleven windows here, or from a terrace over-'grown with grapes, you may behold the broad sea, villas, houses, 'mountains, forts, strewn with rose leaves. Strewn with them? 'Steeped in them! Dyed, through and through and through. 'For a moment. No more. The sun is impatient and fierce '(like everything else in these parts), and goes down headlong. 'Run to fetch your hat—and it's night. Wink at the right time 'of black night—and it's morning. Everything is in extremes. 'There is an insect here that chirps all day. There is one outside 'the window now. The chirp is very loud: something like a Brob-'dingnagian grasshopper. The creature is born to chirp; to 'progress in chirping; to chirp louder, louder, louder, till it gives 'one tremendous chirp and bursts itself. That is its life and 'death. Everything is "in a concatenation accordingly." The 'day gets brighter, brighter, brighter, till it's night. The summer 'gets hotter, hotter, hotter, till it explodes. The fruit gets riper, 'riper, riper, till it tumbles down and rots . . . Ask me a question 'or two about fresco: will you be so good? All the houses are 'painted in fresco, hereabout (the outside walls I mean, the 'fronts, backs, and sides), and all the colour has run into damp 'and green seediness, and the very design has straggled away 'into the component atoms of the plaster. Beware of fresco! 'Sometimes (but not often) I can make out a Virgin with a 'mildewed glory round her head, holding nothing in an un-'discernible lap with invisible arms; and occasionally the leg or 'arm of a cherub. But it is very melancholy and dim. There 'are two old fresco-painted vases outside my own gate, one on 'either hand, which are so faint that I never saw them till last 'night; and only then, because I was looking over the wall after 'a lizard who had come upon me while I was smoking a cigar 'above, and crawled over one of these embellishments in his 'retreat . . .'

Cicala typical in life and death.

Perishing frescoes.

That letter sketched for me the story of his travel through France, and I may at once say that I thus received, from week to week, the 'first sprightly runnings' of every description in his *Pictures from Italy*. But my rule as to the American letters must

be here observed yet more strictly; and nothing resembling his printed book, however distantly, can be admitted into these pages. Even so my difficulty of rejection will not be less; for as he had not actually decided, until the very last, to publish his present experiences at all, a larger number of the letters were left unrifled by him. He had no settled plan from the first, as in the other case. ALBARO: 1844. Nothing in print repeated here.

His most valued acquaintance at Albaro was the French consul-general, a student of our literature who had written on his books in one of the French reviews, and who with his English wife lived in the very next villa, though so oddly shut away by its vineyard that to get from the one adjoining house to the other was a mile's journey.* Describing, in that August letter, his first call from this new friend thus pleasantly self-recommended, he makes the visit his excuse for breaking off from a facetious description of French inns to introduce to me a sketch, from a pencil outline by Fletcher,† of what bore the imposing name of the Villa di Bella Vista, but which he called by the homelier one of its proprietor, Bagnerello. 'This, my friend, is quite accurate. Allow me to 'explain it. You are standing, sir, in our vineyard, among the 'grapes and figs. The Mediterranean is at your back as you look 'at the house: of which two sides, out of four, are here depicted. 'The lower story (nearly concealed by the vines) consists of the 'hall, a wine-cellar, and some store-rooms. The three windows 'on the left of the first floor belong to the sala, lofty and white-'washed, which has two more windows round the corner. The 'fourth window *did* belong to the dining-room, but I have changed 'one of the nurseries for better air; and it now appertains to that 'branch of the establishment. The fifth and sixth, or two right-'hand windows, sir, admit the light to the inimitable's (and uxor's) 'chamber; to which the first window round the right-hand corner, 'which you perceive in shadow, also belongs. The next window 'in shadow, young sir, is the bower of Miss H. The next, a 'nursery window; the same having two more round the corner French Consul of Genoa. Pencil sketch by Angus-Fletcher. Rooms in villa described.

* 'Their house is next to ours on 'the right, with vineyard between; 'but the place is so oddly contrived 'that one has to go a full mile round 'to get to their door.'

† See next page.

Albaro: 1844.

'again. The bowery-looking place stretching out upon the left 'of the house is the terrace, which opens out from a French 'window in the drawing-room on the same floor of which you see 'nothing, and forms one side of the court-yard. The upper 'windows belong to some of those uncounted chambers upstairs; 'the fourth one, longer than the rest, being in Fletcher's bedroom. 'There is a kitchen or two up there besides, and my dressing-'room; which you can't see from this point of view. The kitchens 'and other offices in use are down below, under that part of the

Surrounding scenery.

'house where the roof is longest. On your left, beyond the bay of

'Genoa, about two miles off, the Alps stretch out into the far hori-'zon; on your right, at three or four miles distance, are mountains 'crowned with forts. The intervening space on both sides is 'dotted with villas, some green, some red, some yellow, some 'blue, some (and ours among the number) pink. At your back, 'as I have said, sir, is the ocean; with the slim Italian tower of

Church-ruin on the rocks.

'the ruined church of St. John the Baptist rising up before it, on 'the top of a pile of savage rocks. You go through the court-'yard, and out at the gate, and down a narrow lane to the sea. 'Note. The sala goes sheer up to the top of the house; the 'ceiling being conical, and the little bedrooms built round the 'spring of its arch. You will observe that we make no pretension

'to architectural magnificence, but that we have abundance of 'room. And here I am, beholding only vines and the sea for 'days together . . . Good Heavens! How I wish you'd come 'for a week or two, and taste the white wine at a penny 'farthing the pint. It is excellent.' . . . Then, after seven days: 'I have got my paper and inkstand and figures now (the box 'from Osnaburgh-terrace only came last Thursday), and can think '—I have begun to do so every morning—with a business-like 'air, of the Christmas book. My paper is arranged, and my pens 'are spread out, in the usual form. I think you know the form— 'don't you? My books have not passed the custom-house yet, 'and I tremble for some volumes of Voltaire . . . I write in the 'best bedroom. The sun is off the corner window at the side of 'the house by a very little after twelve; and I can then throw the 'blinds open, and look up from my paper, at the sea, the moun- 'tains, the washed-out villas, the vineyards, at the blistering white 'hot fort with a sentry on the drawbridge standing in a bit of 'shadow no broader than his own musket, and at the sky, as often 'as I like. It is a very peaceful view, and yet a very cheerful one. 'Quiet as quiet can be.'

ALBARO: 1844.

Vines and sea.

Preparing for work.

Not yet however had the time for writing come. A sharp attack of illness befell his youngest little daughter, Kate, and troubled him much. Then, after beginning the Italian grammar himself, he had to call in the help of a master; and this learning of the language took up time. But he had an aptitude for it, and after a month's application told me (24th of August) that he could ask in Italian for whatever he wanted in any shop or coffeehouse, and could read it pretty well. 'I wish you could see me' (16th of September), 'without my knowing it, walking about alone here. 'I am now as bold as a lion in the streets. The audacity with 'which one begins to speak when there is no help for it, is quite 'astonishing.' The blank impossibility at the outset, however, of getting native meanings conveyed to his English servants, he very humorously described to me; and said the spell was first broken by the cook, 'being really a clever woman, and not entrenching 'herself in that astonishing pride of ignorance which induces the 'rest to oppose themselves to the receipt of any information

Work in abeyance.

English servants.

Albaro: 1844.

'through any channel, and which made A. careless of looking out 'of window, in America, even to see the Falls of Niagara.' So that he soon had to report the gain, to all of them, from the fun of this enterprising woman having so primed herself with 'the 'names of all sorts of vegetables, meats, soups, fruits, and kitchen 'necessaries,' that she was able to order whatever was needful of the peasantry that were trotting in and out all day, basketed and barefooted. Her example became at once contagious;* and before the end of the second week of September news reached me that 'the servants are beginning to pick up scraps of Italian; 'some of them go to a weekly conversazione of servants at the 'Governor's every Sunday night, having got over their consterna- 'tion at the frequent introduction of quadrilles on these occasions: 'and I think they begin to like their foreigneering life.'

Domestic news.

Tradespeople.

In the tradespeople they dealt with at Albaro he found amusing points of character. Sharp as they were after money, their idleness quenched even that propensity. Order for immediate delivery two or three pounds of tea, and the tea-dealer would be wretched. 'Won't it do to-morrow?' 'I want it now,' you would reply; and he would say, 'No, no, there can be no hurry!' He remonstrated against the cruelty. But everywhere there was deference, courtesy, more than civility. 'In a café a little tumbler 'of ice costs something less than threepence, and if you give the 'waiter in addition what you would not offer to an English 'beggar, say, the third of a halfpenny, he is profoundly grateful.' The attentions received from English residents were unremitting.†

Native courtesy.

* Not however, happily for them, in another important particular, for on the eve of their return to England she declared her intention of staying behind and marrying an Italian. 'She 'will have to go to Florence, I find' (12th of May, 1845), 'to be married in 'Lord Holland's house: and even 'then is only married according to the 'English law: having no legal rights 'from such a marriage, either in France 'or Italy. The man hasn't a penny. 'If there were an opening for a nice 'clean restaurant in Genoa—which I 'don't believe there is, for the Genoese 'have a natural enjoyment of dirt, 'garlic, and oil—it would still be a 'very hazardous venture; as the priests 'will certainly damage the man, if 'they can, for marrying a Protestant 'woman. However, the utmost I 'can do is to take care, if such a crisis 'should arrive, that she shall not want 'the means of getting home to Eng- 'land. As my father would observe, 'she has sown and must reap.'

† He had carried with him, I may here mention, letters of introduction to

In moments of need at the outset, they bestirred themselves ('large merchants and grave men') as if they were the family's salaried purveyors; and there was in especial one gentleman named Curry whose untiring kindness was long remembered. ALBARO: 1844.

The light, eager, active figure soon made itself familiar in the streets of Genoa, and he never went into them without bringing some oddity away. I soon heard of the strada Nuova and strada Balbi; of the broadest of the two as narrower than Albany-street, and of the other as less wide than Drury-lane or Wych-street; but both filled with palaces of noble architecture and of such vast dimensions that as many windows as there are days in the year might be counted in one of them, and this not covering by any means the largest plot of ground. I heard too of the other streets, none with footways, and all varying in degrees of narrowness, but for the most part like Field-lane in Holborn, with little breathing-places like St. Martin's-court; and the widest only in parts wide enough to enable a carriage and pair to turn. 'Imagine 'yourself looking down a street of Reform Clubs cramped after 'this odd fashion, the lofty roofs almost seeming to meet in the 'perspective.' In the churches nothing struck him so much as the profusion of trash and tinsel in them that contrasted with their real splendours of embellishment. One only, that of the Cappucini friars, blazed every inch of it with gold, precious stones, and paintings of priceless art; the principal contrast to its radiance being the dirt of its masters, whose bare legs, corded waists, and Genoa the Superb. Church splendours and tinsel.

residents in all parts of Italy, of which I believe he delivered hardly one. Writing to me a couple of months before he left the country he congratulated himself on this fact. 'We are 'living very quietly; and I am now 'more than ever glad that I have kept 'myself aloof from the "receiving" 'natives always, and delivered scarcely 'any of my letters of introduction. If 'I had, I should have seen nothing 'and known less. I have observed 'that the English women who have 'married foreigners are invariably the 'most audacious in the license they 'assume. Think of one lady married 'to a royal chamberlain (not here) 'who said at dinner to the master of 'the house at a place where I was 'dining—that she had brought back 'his *Satirist*, but didn't think there 'was quite so much "fun" in it as 'there used to be. I looked at the 'paper afterwards, and found it crammed with such vile obscenity as positively made one's hair stand on 'end.' Polite literature.

ALBARO: 1844.

Friars and peasants.

coarse brown serge never changed by night or day, [illegible] amid their corporate wealth their personal vows of pov[erty] found them less pleasant to meet and look at than th[e] people of their suburb on festa-days, with the Indulg[ences] gave them the right to make merry stuck in their hats lik[e] tickets. He did not think the peasant girls in gen[eral] looking, though they carried themselves daintily and w[alked]

Old women.

remarkably well: but the ugliness of the old women, b[egotten] hard work and a burning sun, with porters' knots of c[oarse] hair grubbed up over wrinkled and cadaverous faces, h[e thought] quite stupendous. He was never in a street a hundred [yards] long without getting up perfectly the witch part of *Macbeth*.

With the theatres of course he soon became acquainted, and [of] that of the puppets he wrote to me again and again with humorous rapture. 'There are other things,' he added, after giving me the account which is published in his book, 'too solemnly surprising

The puppets.

'to dwell upon. They must be seen. They must be seen. The 'enchanter carrying off the bride is not greater than his men 'brandishing fiery torches and dropping their lighted spirits of 'wine at every shake. Also the enchanter himself, when, hunted 'down and overcome, he leaps into the rolling sea, and finds a 'watery grave. Also the second comic man, aged about 55 and 'like George the Third in the face, when he gives out the play 'for the next night. They must all be seen. They can't be told 'about. Quite impossible. The living performers he did not think so good, a disbelief in Italian actors having been always a heresy with him, and the deplorable length of dialogue to the

Italian plays.

small amount of action in their plays making them sadly tiresome. The first that he saw at the principal theatre was a version of Balzac's *Père Goriot*. 'The domestic Lear I thought at first was 'going to be very clever. But he was too pitiful—perhaps the 'Italian reality would be. He was immensely applauded, though.' He afterwards saw a version of Dumas' preposterous play of *Kean*, in which most of the representatives of English actors wore red hats with steeple crowns, and very loose blouses with broad belts and buckles round their waists. 'There was a mysterious person 'called the Prince of Var-lees' (Wales), 'the youngest and slimmest

'man in the company, whose badinage in Kean's dressing-room 'was irresistible; and the dresser wore top-boots, a Greek skull-'cap, a black velvet jacket, and leather breeches. One or two of 'the actors looked very hard at me to see how I was touched by 'these English peculiarities—especially when Kean kissed his 'male friends on both cheeks.' The arrangements of the house, which he described as larger than Drury-lane, he thought excellent. Instead of a ticket for the private box he had taken on the first tier, he received the usual key for admission which let him in as if he lived there; and for the whole set-out, 'quite as comfortable 'and private as a box at our opera,' paid only eight and fourpence English. The opera itself had not its regular performers until after Christmas, but in the summer there was a good comic company, and he saw the *Scaramuccia* and the *Barber of Seville* brightly and pleasantly done. There was also a day theatre, beginning at half-past four in the afternoon; but beyond the novelty of looking on at the covered stage as he sat in the fresh pleasant air, he did not find much amusement in the Goldoni comedy put before him. There came later a Russian circus, which the unusual rains of that summer prematurely extinguished.

ALBARO: 1844.

Dumas' *Kean.*

Opera and day-theatre.

The Religious Houses he made early and many enquiries about, and there was one that had stirred and baffled his curiosity much before he discovered what it really was. All that was visible from the street was a great high wall, apparently quite alone, no thicker than a party wall, with grated windows, to which iron screens gave farther protection. At first he supposed there had been a fire; but by degrees came to know that on the other side were galleries, one above another, and nuns always pacing them to and fro. Like the wall of a racket-ground outside, it was inside a very large nunnery; and let the poor sisters walk never so much, neither they nor the passers-by could see anything of each other. It was close upon the Acqua Sola, too; a little park with still young but very pretty trees, and fresh and cheerful fountains, which the Genoese made their Sunday promenade; and underneath which was an archway with great public tanks, where, at all ordinary times, washerwomen were washing away, thirty or forty together. At Albaro they were worse off in this matter: the clothes there

Religious houses.

Sunday promenade.

ALBARO: 1844.

being washed in a pond, beaten with gourds, and whitened with a preparation of lime: 'so that,' he wrote to me (24th of August), 'what between the beating and the burning they fall into holes 'unexpectedly, and my white trowsers, after six weeks' washing, 'would make very good fishing-nets. It is such a serious 'damage that when we get into the Peschiere we mean to wash 'at home.'

Winter residence chosen.

Exactly a fortnight before this date, he had hired rooms in the Peschiere from the first of the following October; and so ended the house-hunting for his winter residence, that had taken him so often to the city. The Peschiere was the largest palace in Genoa let on hire, and had the advantage of standing on a height aloof from the town, surrounded by its own gardens. The rooms taken had been occupied by an English colonel, the remainder of whose term was let to Dickens for 500 francs a month (£20); and a few days after (20th of August) he described to me a fellow tenant:

A fellow tenant.

'A Spanish duke has taken the room under me in the Peschiere. 'The duchess was his mistress many years, and bore him (I think) 'six daughters. He always promised her that if she gave birth 'to a son, he would marry her; and when at last the boy arrived, 'he went into her bedroom saying—"Duchess, I am charmed to '"salute you!" And he married her in good earnest, and 'legitimatized (as by the Spanish law he could) all the other 'children.' The beauty of the new abode will justify a little description when he takes up his quarters there. One or two incidents may be related, meanwhile, of the closing weeks of his residence at Albaro.

Dinner at French consul's.

In the middle of August he dined with the French consul general, and there will now be no impropriety in printing his agreeable sketch of the dinner. 'There was present, among 'other Genoese, the Marquis di Negri: a very fat and much 'older Jerdan, with the same thickness of speech and size of 'tongue. He was Byron's friend, keeps open house here, writes 'poetry, improvises, and is a very good old Blunderbore; just 'the sort of instrument to make an artesian well with, anywhere. 'Well, sir, after dinner, the consul proposed my health, with a 'little French conceit to the effect that I had come to Italy to

'have personal experience of its lovely climate, and that there ALBARO: 1844.
'was this similarity between the Italian sun and its visitor, that
'the sun shone into the darkest places and made them bright and
'happy with its benignant influence, and that my books had done
'the like with the breasts of men, and so forth. Upon which
'Blunderbore gives his bright-buttoned blue coat a great rap on
'the breast, turns up his fishy eye, stretches out his arm like the
'living statue defying the lightning at Astley's, and delivers four Complimentary verses.
'impromptu verses in my honour, at which everybody is en-
'chanted, and I more than anybody—perhaps with the best
'reason, for I didn't understand a word of them. The consul
'then takes from his breast a roll of paper, and says, "I shall
'"read them!" Blunderbore then says, "Don't!" But the
'consul does, and Blunderbore beats time to the music of the
'verse with his knuckles on the table; and perpetually ducks
'forward to look round the cap of a lady sitting between himself
'and me, to see what I think of them. I exhibit lively emotion.
'The verses are in French—short line—on the taking of Tangiers Ode to Joinville.
'by the Prince de Joinville; and are received with great
'applause; especially by a nobleman present who is reported to
'be unable to read and write. They end in my mind (rapidly
'translating them into prose) thus—

'The cannon of France
'Shake the foundation
'Of the wondering sea,
'The artillery on the shore
'Is put to silence,
'Honour to Joinville
'And the Brave!
'The Great Intelligence
'Is borne
'Upon the wings of Fame
'To Paris.
'Her national citizens
'Exchange caresses
'In the streets!
'The temples are crowded
'With religious patriots
'Rendering thanks
'To Heaven.
'The King
'And all the Royal Family
'Are bathed
'In tears.
'They call upon the name
'Of Joinville!
'France also
'Weeps, and echoes it.
'Joinville is crowned
'With Immortality;
'And Peace and Joinville,
'And the Glory of France,
'Diffuse themselves
'Conjointly.

'If you can figure to yourself the choice absurdity of receiving
'anything into one's mind in this way, you can imagine the
'labour I underwent in my attempts to keep the lower part of
'my face square, and to lift up one eye gently, as with admiring

ALBARO: 1844.

'attention. But I am bound to add that this is really pretty 'literal; for I read them afterwards.' At his French friend's house he afterwards made the acquaintance of Lamartine.

Tahiti discomforts.

This was the year of several uncomfortable glories incident to France in the last three years of her Orleans dynasty, among them the Tahiti business, as politicians may remember; and so hot became rumours of war with England at the opening of September that Dickens had serious thoughts of at once striking his tent. One of his letters was filled with the conflicting doubts in which they lived for nigh a fortnight, every day's arrival contradicting the arrival of the day before: so that, as he told me, you met a man in the street to-day, who told you there would certainly be war in a week; and you met the same man in the street to-morrow, and he swore he always knew there would be nothing but peace; and you met him again the day after, and he said it all depended *now* on something perfectly new and unheard of before, which somebody else said had just come to the knowledge of some consul in some dispatch which said something about some telegraph which had been at work somewhere, signalizing some prodigious intelligence. However, it all passed harmlessly away, leaving him undisturbed opportunity to avail himself of a pleasure that arose out of the consul-general's dinner party, and to be present at a great reception given shortly after by the good 'old Blunderbore' just mentioned, on the occasion of his daughter's birthday.

Rumours of war with England.

Reception at M. di Negri's.

The Marquis had a splendid house, but Dickens found the grounds so carved into grottoes and fanciful walks as to remind him of nothing so much as our old White-conduit-house, except that he would have been well pleased, on the present occasion, to have discovered a waiter crying, 'Give your orders, gents!' it being not easy to him at any time to keep up, the whole night through, on ices and variegated lamps merely. But the scene for awhile was amusing enough, and not rendered less so by the delight of the Marquis himself, 'who was constantly diving out 'into dark corners and then among the lattice-work and flower 'pots, rubbing his hands and going round and round with 'explosive chuckles in his huge satisfaction with the entertain-

Delight of the host.

'ment.' With horror it occurred to Dickens, however, that four more hours of this kind of entertainment would be too much; that the Genoa gates closed at twelve; and that as the carriage had not been ordered till the dancing was expected to be over and the gates to reopen, he must make a sudden bolt if he would himself get back to Albaro. 'I had barely time,' he told me, 'to reach the gate before midnight; and was running as hard as I could go, downhill, over uneven ground, along a new street called the strada Sevra, when I came to a pole fastened straight across the street, nearly breast high, without any light or watchman—quite in the Italian style. I went over it, headlong, with such force that I rolled myself completely white in the dust; but although I tore my clothes to shreds, I hardly scratched myself except in one place on the knee. I had no time to think of it then, for I was up directly and off again to save the gate: but when I got outside the wall and saw the state I was in, I wondered I had not broken my neck. I "took it easy" after this, and walked home, by lonely ways enough, without meeting a single soul. But there is nothing to be feared, I believe, from midnight walks in this part of Italy. In other places you incur the danger of being stabbed by mistake; whereas the people here are quiet and good-tempered, and very rarely commit any outrage.'

ALBARO: 1844.

Flight of the guest.

Midnight walks.

Such adventures, nevertheless, are seldom without consequences, and there followed in this case a short but sharp attack of illness. It came on with the old 'unspeakable and agonizing pain in the side,' for which Bob Fagin had prepared and applied the hot bottles in the old warehouse time; and it yielded quickly to powerful remedies. But for a few days he had to content himself with the minor sights of Albaro. He sat daily in the shade of the ruined chapel on the seashore. He looked in at the festa in the small country church, consisting mainly of a tenor singer, a seraphine, and four priests sitting gaping in a row on one side of the altar, 'in flowered satin dresses and little cloth caps, looking exactly like the band at a wild-beast caravan.' He was interested in the wine-making, and in seeing the country tenants preparing their annual presents for their landlords, of baskets of grapes and

Ante, 32.

Quiet enjoyments.

Albaro: 1844.

other fruit prettily dressed with flowers. The season of the grapes, too, brought out after dusk strong parties of rats to eat them as they ripened, and so many shooting parties of peasants to get rid of these despoilers, that as he first listened to the uproar of the firing and the echoes he half fancied it a siege of Albaro. The flies mustered strong, too, and the mosquitos;* so that at night he had to lie covered up with gauze, like cold meat in a safe.

English news.

Of course all news from England, and especially visits paid him by English friends who might be travelling in Italy, were a great delight. This was the year when O'Connell was released from prison by the judgment of the Lords on appeal. 'I have no faith

O'Connell appeal.

'in O'Connell taking the great position he might upon this: 'being beleaguered by vanity always. Denman delights me. I 'am glad to think I have always liked him so well. I am sure 'that whenever he makes a mistake, it *is* a mistake; and that no 'man lives who has a grander and nobler scorn of every mean 'and dastard action. I would to Heaven it were decorous to pay 'him some public tribute of respect . . . . O'Connell's speeches 'are the old thing: fretty, boastful, frothy, waspish at the voices

Carlyle on Mazzini.

'in the crowd, and all that: but with no true greatness. . . . What 'a relief to turn to that noble letter of Carlyle's' (in which a timely testimony had been borne to the truthfulness and honour of Mazzini), 'which I think above all praise. My love to him.' Among his English visitors were Mr. Tagart's family, on their way from a scientific congress at Milan; and Peter (now become

Lord Robertson.

Lord) Robertson from Rome, of whose talk he wrote pleasantly. The sons of Burns had been entertained during the autumn in Ayrshire at what was called a Burns Festival, of which, through

* What his poor little dog suffered should not be omitted from the troubles of the master who was so fond of him. 'Timber has had every hair upon his 'body cut off because of the fleas, and 'he looks like the ghost of a drowned 'dog come out of a pond after a week 'or so. It is very awful to see him 'slide into a room. He knows the 'change upon him, and is always 'turning round and round to look for 'himself. I think he'll die of grief.' Three weeks later: 'Timber's hair is 'growing again, so that you can dimly 'perceive him to be a dog. The fleas 'only keep three of his legs off the 'ground now, and he sometimes moves 'of his own accord towards some 'place where they don't want to go.' His improvement was slow, but after this continuous.

Jerrold who was present, no very favourable account had been sent him; and this was now confirmed by Robertson. 'There 'was one man who spoke a quarter of an hour or so, to the toast 'of the navy; and could say nothing more than "the—British— '"navy—always appreciates—" which remarkable sentiment he 'repeated over and over again for that space of time; and then 'sat down. Robertson told me also that Wilson's allusion to, or 'I should rather say expatiation upon, the "vices" of Burns, 'excited but one sentiment: and added, very sensibly, "By God! '"I want to know *what Burns did!* I never heard of his doing '"anything that need be strange or unaccountable to the Pro- '"fessor's mind." In short he fully confirmed Jerrold in all 'respects.' The same letter told, too, something of his reading. Jerrold's *Story of a Feather* he had derived much enjoyment from. 'Gauntwolf's sickness and the career of that snuffbox, masterly.* 'I have been deep in Voyages and Travels, and in De Foe. 'Tennyson I have also been reading, again and again. What a 'great creature he is . . . What about the *Goldsmith?* Apropos, 'I am all eagerness to write a story about the length of his most 'delightful of all stories.'

ALBARO: 1844.

Burns festival.

Readings.

In the second week of September he went to meet his brother Frederick at Marseilles, and bring him back over the Cornice road to pass a fortnight's holiday at Genoa; and his description of the first inn upon the Alps they slept in is too good to be lost. 'We 'lay last night,' he wrote (9th of September) 'at the first halting- 'place on this journey, in an inn which is not entitled, as it ought 'to be, The house of call for fleas and vermin in general, but is 'entitled The grand hotel of the Post! I hardly know what to 'compare it to. It seemed something like a house in Somers- 'town originally built for a wine-vaults and never finished, but 'grown very old. There was nothing to eat in it and nothing to 'drink. They had lost the teapot; and when they found it, they 'couldn't make out what had become of the lid, which, turning

Visit of his brother.

A grand hotel of the Post.

* A characteristic message for Jerrold came in a later letter (12th of May, 1845): 'I wish you would suggest to Jerrold for me as a Caudle subject (if 'he pursue that idea), "Mr. Caudle '"has incidentally remarked that the '"housemaid is good-looking."'

ALBARO: 1844.

'up at last and being fixed on to the teapot, couldn't be got off
'again for the pouring in of more water. Fleas of elephantine
'dimensions were gambolling boldly in the dirty beds, and the
'mosquitoes!—But here let me draw a curtain (as I would have
'done if there had been any). We had scarcely any sleep, and
'rose up with hands and arms hardly human.'

In four days they were at Albaro, and the morning after their arrival Dickens underwent the terrible shock of seeing his brother very nearly drowned in the bay. He swam out into too strong a current,* and was only narrowly saved by the accident of a fishing boat preparing to leave the harbour at the time. 'It was a world
'of horror and anguish,' Dickens wrote to me, 'crowded into four
'or five minutes of dreadful agitation; and, to complete the
'terror of it, Georgy, Charlotte' (the nurse), 'and the children
'were on a rock in full view of it all, crying, as you may suppose,
'like mad creatures.' His own bathing was from the rock, and, as he had already told me, of the most primitive kind. He went in whenever he pleased, broke his head against sharp stones if he went in with that end foremost, floundered about till he was all over bruises, and then climbed and staggered out again. 'Every
'body wears a dress. Mine extremely theatrical: Masaniello to
'the life: shall be preserved for your inspection in Devonshire-
'terrace.' I will add another personal touch, also Masaniello-like, which marks the beginning of a change which, though confined for the present to his foreign residence and removed when he came to England, was resumed somewhat later, and in a few more years wholly altered the aspect of his face. 'The moustaches
'are glorious, glorious. I have cut them shorter, and trimmed
'them a little at the ends to improve the shape. They are charm-
'ing, charming. Without them, life would be a blank.'

His brother in danger.

A change beginning.

A monk drowned.

* Of the dangers of the bay he had before written to me (10th of August). 'A monk was drowned here on Saturday evening. He was bathing with 'two other monks, who bolted when 'he cried out that he was sinking—in 'consequence, I suppose, of his certainty of going to Heaven.'

V.

WORK IN GENOA: PALAZZO PESCHIERE.

1844.

GENOA: 1844.

IN the last week of September they moved from Albaro into Genoa, amid a violent storm of wind and wet, 'great guns blowing,' the lightning incessant, and the rain driving down in a dense thick cloud. But the worst of the storm was over when they reached the Peschiere. As they passed into it along the stately old terraces, flanked on either side with antique sculptured figures, all the seven fountains were playing in its gardens, and the sun was shining brightly on its groves of camellias and orange-trees.

Palace of the Fish-ponds.

It was a wonderful place, and I soon became familiar with the several rooms that were to form their home for the rest of their stay in Italy. In the centre was the grand sala, fifty feet high, of an area larger than 'the dining-room of the Academy,' and painted, walls and ceiling, with frescoes three hundred years old, 'as fresh as if the colours had been laid on yesterday.' On the same floor as this great hall were a drawing-room, and a dining-room,* both covered also with frescoes still bright enough to make them thoroughly cheerful, and both so nicely proportioned as to give to their bigness all the effect of snugness.† Out of these

* 'Into which we might put your 'large room—I wish we could!— 'away in one corner, and dine with- 'out knowing it.'

† 'Very vast you will say, and very 'dreary; but it is not so really. The 'paintings are so fresh, and the pro- 'portions so agreeable to the eye, that 'the effect is not only cheerful, but 'snug. . . . We are a little incom- 'moded by applications from strangers 'to go over the interior. The paint- 'ings were designed by Michael 'Angelo, and have a great reputation. '. . . Certain of these frescoes were 'reported officially to the Fine Art 'Commissioners by Wilson as the best 'in Italy. . . . I allowed a party of 'priests to be shown the great hall 'yesterday. . . . It is in perfect re- 'pair, and the doors almost shut— 'which is quite a miraculous circum-

Frescoes.

Genoa: 1844.

Rooms described.

opened three other chambers that were turned into sleeping-rooms and nurseries. Adjoining the sala, right and left, were the two best bed-rooms; 'in size and shape like those at Windsor-castle 'but greatly higher;' both having altars, a range of three windows with stone balconies, floors tesselated in patterns of black and white stone, and walls painted every inch: on the left, nymphs pursued by satyrs 'as large as life and as wicked;' on the right

Mural paintings.

'Phaeton larger than life, with horses bigger than Meux and Co.'s, 'tumbling headlong down into the best bed.' The right-hand room he occupied with his wife, and of the left took possession as a study; writing behind a big screen he had lugged into it, and placed by one of the windows, from which he could see over the city, as he wrote, as far as the lighthouse in its harbour. Distant little over a mile as the crow flew, flashing five times in four minutes, and on dark nights, as if by magic, illuminating brightly

View over city.

'stance. I wish you could see it, my 'dear F. Gracious Heavens! if you 'could only *come back* with me, 'wouldn't I soon flash on your 'astonished sight.' (6th of October.)

the whole palace-front every time it shone, this lighthouse was one of the wonders of Genoa. GENOA: 1844.

When it had all become more familiar to him, he was fond of dilating on its beauties; and even the dreary sound of the chaunting from neighbouring mass-performances, as it floated in at all the open windows, which at first was a sad trouble, came to have its charm for him. I remember a vivid account he gave me of a great festa on the hill behind the house, when the people alternately danced under tents in the open air and rushed to say a prayer or two in an adjoining church bright with red and gold and blue and silver; so many minutes of dancing, and of praying, in regular turns of each. Dancing and praying. But the view over into Genoa, on clear bright days, was a never failing enjoyment. The whole city then, without an atom of smoke, and with every possible variety of tower and steeple pointing up into the sky, lay stretched out below his windows. To the right and left were lofty hills, with every indentation in their rugged sides sharply discernible; and on one side of the harbour stretched away into the dim bright distance the whole of the Cornice, its first highest range of mountains hoary with snow. Distant scenery. Sitting down one Spring day to write to me, he thus spoke of the sea and of the garden. 'Beyond the 'town is the wide expanse of the Mediterranean, as blue, at this 'moment, as the most pure and vivid prussian blue on Mac's 'palette when it is newly set; and on the horizon there is a red 'flush, seen nowhere as it is here. Immediately below the win- 'dows are the gardens of the house, with gold fish swimming and 'diving in the fountains; and below them, at the foot of a steep 'slope, the public garden and drive, where the walks are marked 'out by hedges of pink roses, which blush and shine through the 'green trees and vines, close up to the balconies of these win- 'dows. No custom can impair, and no description enhance, the 'beauty of the scene.' Peschiere garden.

All these and other glories and beauties, however, did not come to him at once. They counted for little indeed when he first set himself seriously to write. 'Never did I stagger so upon a thres- 'hold before. I seem as if I had plucked myself out of my proper 'soil when I left Devonshire-terrace; and could take root no Trying to write.

GENOA: 1844.

Difficulties in the way.

'more until I return to it. . . . Did I tell you how many [illegible] 'we have here? No matter. If they played ne[illegible] they 'wouldn't please me half so well as the West Middlesex water-'works at Devonshire-terrace.' The subject for his new Christmas story he had chosen, but he had not found a title for it, or the machinery to work it with; when, at the moment of what seemed to be his greatest trouble, both reliefs came. Sitting down one morning resolute for work, though against the grain, his hand being out and everything inviting to idleness, such a peal of chimes arose from the city as he found to be 'maddening.' All Genoa lay beneath him, and up from it, with some sudden set of the wind, came in one fell sound the clang and clash of all its steeples, pouring into his ears, again and again, in a tuneless, grating, discordant, jerking, hideous vibration that made his ideas 'spin 'round and round till they lost themselves in a whirl of vexation 'and giddiness, and dropped down dead.' He had never before so suffered, nor did he again; but this was his description to me next day, and his excuse for having failed in a promise to send me his title. Only two days later, however, came a letter in which not a syllable was written but 'We have heard THE CHIMES at 'midnight, Master Shallow!' and I knew he had discovered what he wanted.

A peal of chimes.

A title found.

Other difficulties were still to be got over. He craved for the London streets. He so missed his long night-walks before beginning anything that he seemed, as he said, dumbfounded without them. 'I can't help thinking of the boy in the school-class whose 'button was cut off by Walter Scott and his friends. Put me 'down on Waterloo-bridge at eight o'clock in the evening, with 'leave to roam about as long as I like, and I would come home, 'as you know, panting to go on. I am sadly strange as it is, and 'and can't settle. You will have lots of hasty notes from me 'while I am at work: but you know your man; and whatever 'strikes me, I shall let off upon you as if I were in Devonshire-'terrace. It's a great thing to have my title, and see my way how 'to work the bells. Let them clash upon me now from all the 'churches and convents in Genoa, I see nothing but the old 'London belfry I have set them in. In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Craving for streets by night.

Design for his book.

'I like more and more my notion of making, in this little book, 'a great blow for the poor. Something powerful, I think I can 'do, but I want to be tender too, and cheerful; as like the *Carol* 'in that respect as may be, and as unlike it as such a thing can 'be. The duration of the action will resemble it a little, but I 'trust to the novelty of the machinery to carry that off; and if my 'design be anything at all, it has a grip upon the very throat of 'the time.' (8th of October.) GENOA: 1844. Design for his book.

Thus bent upon his work, for which he never had been in more earnest mood, he was disturbed by hearing that he must attend the levee of the Governor who had unexpectedly arrived in the city, and who would take it as an affront, his eccentric friend Fletcher told him, if that courtesy were not immediately paid. 'It was the 'morning on which I was going to begin, so I wrote round to our 'consul,'—praying, of course, that excuse should be made for him. Don't bother yourself, replied that sensible functionary, for all the consuls and governors alive; but shut yourself up by all means. 'So,' continues Dickens, telling me the tale, 'he went 'next morning in great state and full costume, to present two 'English gentlemen. "Where's the great poet?" said the 'Governor. "I want to see the great poet." "The great poet, '"your excellency," said the consul, "is at work, writing a book, '"and begged me to make his excuses." "Excuses!" said the 'Governor, "I wouldn't interfere with such an occupation for all the '"world. Pray tell him that my house is open to the honour of '"his presence when it is perfectly convenient for him; but not '"otherwise. And let no gentleman," said the Governor, a sur- 'weyin' of his suite with a majestic eye, "call upon Signor '"Dickens till he is understood to be disengaged." And he sent 'somebody with his own cards next day. Now I *do* seriously call 'this, real politeness and pleasant consideration—not positively 'American, but still gentlemanly and polished. The same spirit 'pervades the inferior departments; and I have not been required 'to observe the usual police regulations, or to put myself to the 'slightest trouble about anything.' (18th of October.) Governor's levee. Absence of the poet. Governor's message.

The picture I am now to give of him at work should be prefaced by a word or two that may throw light on the design he was Subject he is working at:

GENOA: 1844.

working at. 'It was a large theme for so small an instrument; and the disproportion was not more characteristic of the man, than the throes of suffering and passion to be presently undergone by him for results that many men would smile at. He was born, as he says, on striking a blow for the poor. They had always been his clients, they had never been forgotten in any of his books, but here nothing else was to be remembered. He had become, in short, terribly earnest in the matter. Several months before he left England I had noticed in him the habit of more gravely regarding many things before passed lightly enough; the hopelessness of any true solution of either political or social problems by the ordinary Downing-street methods had been startlingly impressed on him in Carlyle's writings; and in the parliamentary talk of that day he had come to have as little faith for the putting down of any serious evil, as in a then notorious city alderman's gabble for the putting down of suicide. The latter had stirred his indignation to its depths just before he came to Italy, and his increased opportunities of solitary reflection since had strengthened and extended it. When he came therefore to think of his new story for Christmas time, he resolved to make it a plea for the poor. He did not want it to resemble his *Carol*, but the same kind of moral was in his mind. He was to try and convert Society, as he had converted Scrooge, by showing that its happiness rested on the same foundations as those of the individual, which are mercy and charity not less than justice. Whether right or wrong in these assumptions, need not be questioned here, where facts are merely stated to render intelligible what will follow; he had not made politics at any time a study, and they were always an instinct with him rather than a science; but the instinct was wholesome and sound, and to set class against class he never ceased to think as odious as he thought it righteous at all times to help each to a kindlier knowledge of the other. And so, here in Italy, amid the grand surroundings of this Palazzo Peschiere, the hero of his imagination was to be a sorry old drudge of a London ticket-porter, who in his anxiety not to distrust or think hardly of the rich, has fallen into the opposite extreme of distrusting the poor. From such distrust it is the object of the story to reclaim him; and, to the writer of

how thought of.

Plea for the poor.

Dickens's politics.

Choice of a hero.

it, the tale became itself of less moment than what he thus intended it to enforce. Far beyond mere vanity in authorship went the passionate zeal with which he began, and the exultation with which he finished, this task. When we met at its close, he was fresh from Venice, which had impressed him as 'the wonder' and 'the new sensation' of the world: but well do I remember how high above it all arose the hope that filled his mind. 'Ah!' he said to me, 'when I saw those places, how I thought that to 'leave one's hand upon the time, lastingly upon the time, with one 'tender touch for the mass of toiling people that nothing could 'obliterate, would be to lift oneself above the dust of all the Doges 'in their graves, and stand upon a giant's staircase that Sampson 'couldn't overthrow!' In varying forms this ambition was in all his life.

GENOA: 1844.

Master-passion.

Another incident of these days will exhibit aspirations of a more solemn import that were not less part of his nature. It was depth of sentiment rather than clearness of faith which kept safe the belief on which they rested against all doubt or question of its sacredness, but every year seemed to strengthen it in him. This was told me in his second letter after reaching the Peschiere; the first having sent me some such commissions in regard to his wife's family as his kindly care for all connected with him frequently led to. 'Let me tell you,' he wrote (30th of September), 'of a curious dream I had, last Monday night; and of the fragments of reality I can collect, which helped to make it up. 'I have had a return of rheumatism in my back, and knotted 'round my waist like a girdle of pain; and had laid awake nearly 'all that night under the infliction, when I fell asleep and dreamed 'this dream. Observe that throughout I was as real, animated, 'and full of passion as Macready (God bless him!) in the last 'scene of *Macbeth*. In an indistinct place, which was quite 'sublime in its indistinctness, I was visited by a Spirit. I could 'not make out the face, nor do I recollect that I desired to do so. 'It wore a blue drapery, as the Madonna might in a picture by 'Raphael; and bore no resemblance to any one I have known 'except in stature. I think (but I am not sure) that I recognised 'the voice. Anyway, I knew it was poor Mary's spirit. I was

Religious sentiment.

A dream.

Ante, 76-7.

'not at all afraid, but in a great delight, so that I wept very much,
'and stretching out my arms to it called it "Dear." At this, I
'thought it recoiled; and I felt immediately, that not being of my
'gross nature, I ought not to have addressed it so familiarly.
'"Forgive me!" I said. "We poor living creatures are only
'"able to express ourselves by looks and words. I have used
'"the word most natural to *our* affections; and you know my
'"heart." It was so full of compassion and sorrow for me—
'which I knew spiritually, for, as I have said, I didn't perceive
'its emotions by its face—that it cut me to the heart; and I said,
'sobbing, "Oh! give me some token that you have really visited
'me!" "Form a wish," it said. I thought, reasoning with
'myself: "If I form a selfish wish, it will vanish." So I hastily
'discarded such hopes and anxieties of my own as came into my
'mind, and said, "Mrs. Hogarth is surrounded with great dis-
'"tresses"—observe, I never thought of saying "your mother"
'as to a mortal creature—"will you extricate her?" "Yes."
'"And her extrication is to be a certainty to me, that this has
'"really happened?" "Yes." "But answer me one other
'"question!" I said, in an agony of entreaty lest it should leave
'me. "What is the True religion?" As it paused a moment
'without replying, I said—Good God in such an agony of haste,
'lest it should go away!—"You think, as I do, that the Form
'"of religion does not so greatly matter, if we try to do good?
'"or," I said, observing that it still hesitated, and was moved
'with the greatest compassion for me, perhaps "the Roman
'"Catholic is the best? perhaps it makes one think of God
'"oftener, and believe in him more steadily?" "For *you*," said
'the Spirit, full of such heavenly tenderness for me, that I felt as
'if myheart would break; "for *you*, it is the best!" Then I
'awoke, with the tears running down my face, and myself in
'exactly the condition of the dream. It was just dawn. I called
'up Kate, and repeated it three or four times over, that I might
'not unconsciously make it plainer or stronger afterwards. It was
'exactly this. Free from all hurry, nonsense, or confusion, what-
'ever. Now, the strings I can gather up, leading to this, were
'three. The first you know, from the main subject of my last

Dialogue in a vision.

Question of questions.

Fragments of reality.

'letter. The second was, that there is a great altar in our bed- GENOA: 1844.
'room, at which some family who once inhabited this palace had
'mass performed in old time: and I had observed within myself,
'before going to bed, that there was a mark in the wall, above the
'sanctuary, where a religious picture used to be; and I had won-
'dered within myself what the subject might have been, *and what*
'*the face was like.* Thirdly, I had been listening to the convent
'bells (which ring at intervals in the night), and so had thought,
'no doubt, of Roman Catholic services. And yet, for all this,
'put the case of that wish being fulfilled by any agency in which
'I had no hand; and I wonder whether I should regard it as a
'dream, or an actual Vision!' It was perhaps natural that he should omit, from his own considerations awakened by the dream, the very first that would have risen in any mind to which his was intimately known—that it strengthens other evidences, of which there are many in his life, of his not having escaped those trying regions of reflection which most men of thought and all men of genius have at some time to pass through. In such disturbing fancies during the next year or two, I may add that the book which helped him most was the *Life of Arnold.* 'I respect and 'reverence his memory,' he wrote to me in the middle of October, in reply to my mention of what had most attracted myself in it, 'beyond all expression. I must have that book. Every sentence 'that you quote from it is the text-book of my faith.'

Trying regions of thought.

He kept his promise that I should hear from him while writing, and I had frequent letters when he was fairly in his work. 'With 'my steam very much up, I find it a great trial to be so far off 'from you, and consequently to have no one (always excepting 'Kate and Georgy) to whom to expatiate on my day's work. And 'I want a crowded street to plunge into at night. And I want to 'be "on the spot" as it were. But apart from such things, the 'life I lead is favourable to work.' In his next letter: 'I am in 'regular, ferocious excitement with the *Chimes;* get up at seven; 'have a cold bath before breakfast; and blaze away, wrathful and 'red-hot, until three o'clock or so: when I usually knock off '(unless it rains) for the day . . I am fierce to finish in a spirit 'bearing some affinity to those of truth and mercy, and to shame

Hard at work.

GENOA: 1844.

'the cruel and the canting. I have not forgotten my catechism.
'"Yes verily, and with God's help, so I will!"'

First part finished.

Within a week he had completed his first part, or quarter. 'I send
'you to-day' (18th of October), 'by mail, the first and longest of
'the four divisions. This is great for the first week, which is usually
'up-hill. I have kept a copy in shorthand in case of accidents. I
'hope to send you a parcel every Monday until the whole is done.
'I do not wish to influence you, but it has a great hold upon me,
'and has affected me, in the doing, in divers strong ways, deeply,
'forcibly. To give you better means of judgment I will sketch
'for you the general idea, but pray don't read it until you have
'read this first part of the MS.' I print it here. It is a good
illustration of his method in all his writing. His idea is in it so
thoroughly, that, by comparison with the tale as printed, we see the
strength of its mastery over his first design. Thus always, whether
his tale was to be written in one or in twenty numbers, his fancies
controlled him. He never, in any of his books, accomplished
what he had wholly preconceived, often as he attempted it. Few
men of genius ever did. Once at the sacred heat that opens
regions beyond ordinary vision, imagination has its own laws; and
where characters are so real as to be treated as existences, their
creator himself cannot help them having their own wills and ways.

Anticipation of the close.

Differences from published tale.

Fern the farm-labourer is not here, not yet his niece the little
Lilian (at first called Jessie) who is to give to the tale its most
tragical scene; and there are intimations of poetic fancy at the
close of my sketch which the published story fell short of. Altogether
the comparison is worth observing.

'The general notion is this. That what happens to poor Trotty
'in the first part, and what will happen to him in the second
'(when he takes the letter to a punctual and a great man of busi-
'ness, who is balancing his books and making up his accounts, and
'complacently expatiating on the necessity of clearing off every
'liability and obligation, and turning over a new leaf and starting
'fresh with the new year), so dispirits him, who can't do this, that
'he comes to the conclusion that his class and order have no
'business with a new year, and really are "intruding." And
'though he will pluck up for an hour or so, at the christening (I

First outline of *Chimes*.

'think) of a neighbour's child, that evening: still, when he goes 'home, Mr. Filer's precepts will come into his mind, and he will 'say to himself, "we are a long way past the proper average of '"children, and it has no business to be born:" and will be 'wretched again. And going home, and sitting there alone, he 'will take that newspaper out of his pocket, and reading of the 'crimes and offences of the poor, especially of those whom Alder-'man Cute is going to put down, will be quite confirmed in his 'misgiving that they are bad; irredeemably bad. In this state of 'mind, he will fancy that the Chimes are calling to him; and say-'ing to himself "God help me. Let me go up to 'em. I feel as '"if I were going to die in despair—of a broken heart; let me '"die among the bells that have been a comfort to me!"—will 'grope his way up into the tower; and fall down in a kind of 'swoon among them. Then the third quarter, or in other words 'the beginning of the second half of the book, will open with the 'Goblin part of the thing: the bells ringing, and innumerable 'spirits (the sound or vibration of them) flitting and tearing in and 'out of the church-steeple, and bearing all sorts of missions and 'commissions and reminders and reproaches, and comfortable 'recollections and what not, to all sorts of people and places. 'Some bearing scourges; and others flowers, and birds, and 'music; and others pleasant faces in mirrors, and others ugly 'ones: the bells haunting people in the night (especially the last 'of the old year) according to their deeds. And the bells them-'selves, who have a goblin likeness to humanity in the midst of 'their proper shapes, and who shine in a light of their own, will 'say (the Great Bell being the chief spokesman) Who is he that 'being of the poor doubts the right of poor men to the inheritance 'which Time reserves for them, and echoes an unmeaning cry 'against his fellows? Toby, all aghast, will tell him it is he, and 'why it is. Then the spirits of the bells will bear him through 'the air to various scenes, charged with this trust: That they show 'him how the poor and wretched, at the worst—yes, even in the 'crimes that aldermen put down, and he has thought so horrible—'have some deformed and hunch-backed goodness clinging to 'them; and how they have their right and share in Time. Fol-

GENOA: 1844.

First outline of *Chimes*.

GENOA: 1844.

'lowing out the history of Meg, the Bells will show her, that 'marriage broken off and all friends dead, with an infant child; 'reduced so low, and made so miserable, as to be brought at last 'to wander out at night. And in Toby's sight, her father's sister 'will resolve to drown herself and the child together. But before 'she goes down to the water, Toby will see how she covers it with 'a part of her own wretched dress, and adjusts its rags so as to 'make it pretty in its sleep, and hangs over it, and smooths its 'little limbs, and loves it with the dearest love that God ever gave 'to mortal creatures; and when she runs down to the water, Toby

First outline of *Chimes*.

'will cry "Oh spare her! Chimes, have mercy on her! Stop '"her!"—and the bells will say, "Why stop her? She is bad at '"heart—let the bad die." And Toby on his knees will beg and 'pray for mercy: and in the end the bells will stop her, by their 'voices, just in time. Toby will see, too, what great things the 'punctual man has left undone on the close of the old year, and 'what accounts he has left unsettled: punctual as he is. And he 'will see a great many things about Richard, once so near being 'his son-in-law, and about a great many people. And the moral 'of it all will be, that he has his portion in the new year no less 'than any other man, and that the poor require a deal of beating 'out of shape before their human shape is gone; that even in their 'frantic wickedness there may be good in their hearts triumphantly 'asserting itself, though all the aldermen alive say "No," as he 'has learnt from the agony of his own child; and that the truth is 'Trustfulness in them, not doubt, nor putting down, nor filing 'them away. And when at last a great sea rises, and this sea of 'Time comes sweeping down, bearing the alderman and such 'mudworms of the earth away to nothing, dashing them to frag-'ments in its fury—Toby will climb a rock and hear the bells '(now faded from his sight) pealing out upon the waters. And as 'he hears them, and looks round for help, he will wake up and find 'himself with the newspaper lying at his foot; and Meg sitting 'opposite to him at the table, making up the ribbons for her wed-'ding to-morrow; and the window open, that the sound of the 'bells ringing the old year out and the new year in may enter. 'They will just have broken out, joyfully; and Richard will dash

'in to kiss Meg before Toby, and have the first kiss of the new 'year (he'll get it too); and the neighbours will crowd round with 'good wishes; and a band will strike up gaily (Toby knows a 'Drum in private); and the altered circumstances, and the ringing 'of the bells, and the jolly musick, will so transport the old fellow 'that he will lead off a country dance forthwith in an entirely new 'step, consisting of his old familiar trot. Then quoth the inimi- 'table—Was it a dream of Toby's after all? Or is Toby but a 'dream? and Meg a dream? and all a dream! In reference to 'which, and the realities of which dreams are born, the inimitable 'will be wiser than he can be now, writing for dear life, with the 'post just going, and the brave C booted . . . Ah how I hate 'myself, my dear fellow, for this lame and halting outline of the 'Vision I have in my mind. But it must go to you . . . You will 'say what is best for the frontispiece' . .

GENOA: 1844.

First outline of *Chimes*.

With the second part or quarter, after a week's interval, came announcement of the enlargement of his plan, by which he hoped better to carry out the scheme of the story, and to get, for its following part, an effect for his heroine that would increase the tragic interest. 'I am still in stout heart with the tale. I think 'it well-timed and a good thought; and as you know I wouldn't 'say so to anybody else, I don't mind saying freely thus much. 'It has great possession of me every moment in the day; and 'drags me where it will. . . . If you only could have read it all 'at once!—But you never would have done that, anyway, for I 'never should have been able to keep it to myself; so that's 'nonsense. I hope you'll like it. I would give a hundred 'pounds (and think it cheap) to see you read it. . . . . Never 'mind.'

Liking for subject.

That was the first hint of an intention of which I was soon to hear again; but meanwhile, after eight more days, the third part came, with the scene from which he expected so much, and with a mention of what the writing of it had cost him. 'This book '(whether in the Hajji Baba sense or not I can't say, but certainly 'in the literal one) has made my face white in a foreign land. My 'cheeks, which were beginning to fill out, have sunk again; my 'eyes have grown immensely large; my hair is very lank; and the

Third part finished.

What the writing cost him.

GENOA: 1844

'head inside the hair is hot and giddy. Read the scene at the 'end of the third part, twice. I wouldn't write it twice for some-'thing. . . You will see that I have substituted the name of 'Lilian for Jessie. It is prettier in sound, and suits my music 'better. I mention this, lest you should wonder who and what I 'mean by that name. To-morrow I shall begin afresh (starting 'the next part with a broad grin, and ending it with the very soul 'of jollity and happiness); and I hope to finish by next Monday 'at latest. Perhaps on Saturday. I hope you will like the little

Realities of fictitious sorrow.

'book. Since I conceived, at the beginning of the second part, 'what must happen in the third, I have undergone as much 'sorrow and agitation as if the thing were real; and have wakened 'up with it at night. I was obliged to lock myself in when I 'finished it yesterday, for my face was swollen for the time to 'twice its proper size, and was hugely ridiculous.' . . . His letter ended abruptly. 'I am going for a long walk, to clear my head. 'I feel that I am very shakey from work, and throw down my 'pen for the day. There! (That's where it fell.)' A huge blot represented it, and, as Hamlet says, the rest was silence.

Two days later, answering a letter from me that had reached in the interval, he gave sprightlier account of himself, and described a happy change in the weather. Up to this time, he protested, they had not had more than four or five clear days. All the time he had been writing they had been wild and stormy. 'Wind,

Wild weather.

'hail, rain, thunder and lightning. To-day,' just before he sent me his last manuscript, 'has been November slack-baked, the 'sirocco having come back; and to-night it blows great guns with 'a raging storm.' 'Weather worse,' he wrote after three Mondays,

Mountain rain.

'than any November English weather I have ever beheld, or any 'weather I have had experience of anywhere. So horrible to-day 'that all power has been rained and gloomed out of me. Yester-'day, in pure determination to get the better of it, I walked twelve 'miles in mountain rain. You never saw it rain. Scotland and 'America are nothing to it.' But now all this was over. * 'The 'weather changed on Saturday night, and has been glorious ever 'since. I am afraid to say more in its favour, lest it should 'change again.' It did not. I think there were no more com-

plainings. I heard now of autumn days, with the mountain wind, lovely, enjoyable, exquisite past expression. I heard of mountain walks behind the Peschiere, most beautiful and fresh, among which, and along the beds of dry rivers and torrents, he could 'pelt away,' in any dress, without encountering a soul but the contadini. I heard of his starting off one day after finishing work, 'fifteen miles to dinner—oh my stars! at such an inn!!!' On another day; of a party to dinner at their pleasant little banker's at Quinto six miles off, to which, while the ladies drove, he was able 'to walk in the sun of the middle of the day and to walk 'home again at night.' On another, of an expedition up the mountain on mules. And on another of a memorable tavern-dinner with their merchant friend Mr. Curry, in which there were such successions of surprising dishes of genuine native cookery that they took two hours in the serving, but of the component parts of not one of which was he able to form the remotest conception: the site of the tavern being on the city wall, its name in Italian sounding very romantic and meaning 'the Whistle,' and its bill of fare kept for an experiment to which, before another month should be over, he challenged my cookery in Lincoln's-inn.

GENOA: 1844.

Fifteen miles' walk.

Banquet at the Whistle.

A visit from him to London was to be expected almost immediately! That all remonstrance would be idle, under the restless excitement his work had awakened, I well knew. It was not merely the wish he had, natural enough, to see the last proofs and the woodcuts before the day of publication, which he could not otherwise do; but it was the stronger and more eager wish, before that final launch, to have a vivider sense than letters could give him of the effect of what he had been doing. 'If I come, I shall 'put up at Cuttris's' (then the Piazza-hotel in Covent-garden), 'that I may be close to you. Don't say to anybody, except 'our immediate friends, that I am coming. Then I shall not be 'bothered. If I should preserve my present fierce writing humour, 'in any pass I may run to Venice, Bologna, and Florence, before 'I turn my face towards Lincoln's-inn-fields; and come to England 'by Milan and Turin. But this of course depends in a great 'measure on your reply.' My reply, dwelling on the fatigue and cost, had the reception I foresaw. 'Notwithstanding what you

Startling news.

Coming to London.

GENOA: 1844.

'say, I am still in the same mind about coming to London, 'because the proofs concern me at all (I should be an ass as 'as a thankless vagabond if they did), but because of that 'speakable restless something which would render it almost 'impossible for me to remain here and not see the thing com- 'as it would be for a full balloon, left to itself, not to go up. 'do not intend coming from *here*, but by way of Milan and Turin '(previously going to Venice), and so, across the wildest pass of 'the Alps that may be open, to Strasburg. . . As you dislike the 'Young England gentleman I shall knock him out, and replace 'him by a man (I can dash him in at your rooms in an hour) 'who recognizes no virtue in anything but the good old times, and 'talks of them, parrot-like, whatever the matter is. A real good 'old city tory, in a blue coat and bright buttons and a white 'cravat, and with a tendency of blood to the head. File away at 'Filer, as you please; but bear in mind that the *Westminster* '*Review* considered Scrooge's presentation of the turkey to Bob 'Cratchit as grossly incompatible with political economy. I don't 'care at all for the skittle-playing.' These were among things I had objected to.

'Unspeakable restless something.'

Secret of the visit.

But the close of his letter revealed more than its opening of the reason, not at once so frankly confessed, for the long winter journey he was about to make; and if it be thought that, in printing the passage, I take a liberty with my friend's letter, it will be found that equal liberty is taken with myself, whom it good-naturedly caricatures; so that the reader can enjoy his laugh at either or both. 'Shall I confess to you, I particularly want Carlyle 'above all to see it before the rest of the world, when it is done; 'and I should like to inflict the little story on him and on dear 'old gallant Macready with my own lips, and to have Stanny and 'the other Mac sitting by. Now, if you was a real gent, you'd 'get up a little circle for me, one wet evening, when I come to 'town: and would say, "My boy (SIR, will you have the good- '"ness to leave those books alone and to go downstairs—WHAT '"the Devil are you doing! And mind, sir, I can see nobody— '"Do you hear? Nobody. I am particularly engaged with a '"gentleman from Asia)—My boy, would you give us that

Plans a reading at my rooms.

'"little Christmas book (a little Christmas book of Dickens's, '"Macready, which I'm anxious you should hear); and don't '"slur it, now, or be too fast, Dickens, please!"—I say, if you 'was a real gent, something to this effect might happen. I shall 'be under sailing orders the moment I have finished. And I 'shall produce myself (please God) in London on the very day 'you name. For one week: to the hour.' GENOA: 1844.

The wish was complied with, of course; and that night in Lincoln's-inn-fields led to rather memorable issues. His next letter told me the little tale was done. 'Third of November, '1844. Half-past two, afternoon. Thank God! I have finished 'the *Chimes*. This moment. I take up my pen again to-day, to 'say only that much; and to add that I have had what women 'call "a real good cry!"' Very genuine all this, it is hardly necessary to say. The little book thus completed was not one of his greater successes, and it raised him up some objectors; but there was that in it which more than repaid the suffering its writing cost him, and the enmity its opinions provoked; and in his own heart it had a cherished corner to the last. The intensity of it seemed always best to represent to himself what he hoped to be longest remembered for; and exactly what he felt as to this, his friend Jeffrey warmly expressed. 'All the tribe of selfishness, 'and cowardice and cant, will hate you in their hearts, and cavil 'when they can; will accuse you of wicked exaggeration, and 'excitement to discontent, and what they pleasantly call disaffec-'tion! But never mind. The good and the brave are with you, 'and the truth also.' The tale finished. Jeffrey to Dickens.

He resumed his letter on the fourth of November. 'Here is 'the brave courier measuring bits of maps with a carving-fork, and 'going up mountains on a tea-spoon. He and I start on Wed-'nesday for Parma, Modena, Bologna, Venice, Verona, Brescia, 'and Milan. Milan being within a reasonable journey from here, 'Kate and Georgy will come to meet me when I arrive there on 'my way towards England; and will bring me all letters from 'you. I shall be there on the 18th . . . . . Now, you know my 'punctiwality. Frost, ice, flooded rivers, steamers, horses, pass-'ports, and custom-houses may damage it. But my design is, to Proposed travel.

GENOA: 1844.

'walk into Cuttris's coffee-room on Sunday the 1st of Dec
'in good time for dinner. I shall look for you at the
'table by the fire—where we generally go .... But the pa
Party for the Reading. 'the night following? I know you have consented to the
'Let me see. Don't have any one, this particular nig
'dinner, but let it be a summons for the special purpose a
'past 6. Carlyle, indispensable, and I should like his wife
'things: *her* judgment would be invaluable. You will ask
'and why not his sister? Stanny and Jerrold I shoul
'ticularly wish; Edwin Landseer; Blanchard; perhaps Ha
'and what say you to Fonblanque and Fox? I leave it to
'You know the effect I want to try. .... Think the *Chimes* a
'letter, my dear fellow, and forgive this. I will not fail to write
'to you on my travels. Most probably from Venice. And when
'I meet you (in sound health I hope) oh Heaven! what a week
'we will have.'

VI.

ITALIAN TRAVEL.

1844.

FERRARA: 1844.

So it all fell out accordingly. He parted from his disconsolate wife, as he told me in his first letter from Ferrara, on Wednesday the 6th of November: left her shut up in her palace like a baron's lady in the time of the crusades; and had his first real experience of the wonders of Italy. He saw Parma, Modena, Bologna, Ferrara, Venice, Verona, and Mantua. As to all which the impressions conveyed to me in his letters have been more or less given in his published *Pictures*. They are charmingly expressed. There is a sketch of a cicerone at Bologna which will remain in his books among their many delightful examples of his unerring and loving perception for every gentle, heavenly, and tender soul, under whatever conventional disguise it wanders

Cities and people.

here on earth, whether as poorhouse orphan or lawyer's clerk, architect's pupil at Salisbury or cheerful little guide to graves at Bologna; and there is another memorable description in his Rembrandt sketch, in form of a dream, of the silent, unearthly, watery wonders of Venice. This last, though not written until after his London visit, had been prefigured so vividly in what he wrote at once from the spot, that those passages from his letter* may be read still with a quite undiminished interest. 'I must 'not,' he said, 'anticipate myself. But, my dear fellow, nothing 'in the world that ever you have heard of Venice, is equal to 'the magnificent and stupendous reality. The wildest visions of 'the Arabian Nights are nothing to the piazza of Saint Mark, and 'the first impression of the inside of the church. The gorgeous 'and wonderful reality of Venice is beyond the fancy of the 'wildest dreamer. Opium couldn't build such a place, and en- 'chantment couldn't shadow it forth in a vision. All that I have 'heard of it, read of it in truth or fiction, fancied of it, is left 'thousands of miles behind. You know that I am liable to dis- 'appointment in such things from over-expectation, but Venice 'is above, beyond, out of all reach of coming near, the imagina- 'tion of a man. It has never been rated high enough. It is a 'thing you would shed tears to see. When I came *on board* here

VENICE: 1844.

Venice.

Rapture of enjoyment.

* 'I began this letter, my dear 'friend' (he wrote it from Venice on Tuesday night the 12th of November), 'with the intention of describing my 'travels as I went on. But I have 'seen so much, and travelled so hard '(seldom dining, and being almost 'always up by candle light), that I 'must reserve my crayons for the 'greater leisure of the Peschiere after 'we have met, and I have again re- 'turned to it. As soon as I have 'fixed a place in my mind, I bolt— 'at such strange seasons and at such 'unexpected angles, that the brave C 'stares again. But in this way, and 'by insisting on having everything 'shewn to me whether or no, and 'against all precedents and orders of 'proceeding, I get on wonderfully.' Two days before he had written to me from Ferrara, after the very pretty description of the vineyards between Piacenza and Parma which will be found in the *Pictures from Italy* (pp. 203-4): 'If you want an anti- 'dote to this, I may observe that I 'got up, this moment, to fasten the 'window; and the street looked as 'like some byeway in Whitechapel— 'or—I look again—like Wych Street, 'down by the little barber's shop on 'the same side of the way as Holy- 'well Street—or—I look again—as 'like Holywell Street itself—as ever 'street was like to street, or ever will 'be, in this world.'

Reminders of home.

VENICE: 1844.

Aboard the city.

'last night (after a five miles' row in a gondola; which some
'or other, I wasn't at all prepared for); when, from seeing
'city lying, one light, upon the distant water, like a ship, I
'plashing through the silent and deserted streets; I felt as if
'houses were reality—the water, fever-madness. But when
'the bright, cold, bracing day, I stood upon the piazza
'morning, by Heaven the glory of the place was insupport
'And diving down from that into its wickedness and gloom
'awful prisons, deep below the water; its judgment cham
'secret doors, deadly nooks, where the torches you carry
'you blink as if they couldn't bear the air in which the fri
'scenes were acted; and coming out again into the ra
'unsubstantial Magic of the town; and diving in again, int
'churches, and old tombs—a new sensation, a new mem
'new mind came upon me. Venice is a bit of my brain
'this time. My dear Forster, if you could share my trans
'(as you would if you were here) what would I not give! I
'cruel not to have brought Kate and Georgy; positively cruel
'and base. Canaletti and Stanny, miraculous in their truth.
'Turner, very noble. But the reality itself, beyond all pen or
'pencil. I never saw the thing before that I should be afraid to
'describe. But to tell what Venice is, I feel to be an impossi-
'bility. And here I sit alone, writing it: with nothing to urge
'me on, or goad me to that estimate, which, speaking of it to
'anyone I loved, and being spoken to in return, would lead me
'to form. In the sober solitude of a famous inn; with the great
'bell of Saint Mark ringing twelve at my elbow; with three
'arched windows in my room (two stories high) looking down
'upon the grand canal and away, beyond, to where the sun went
'down to-night in a blaze; and thinking over again those silent
'speaking faces of Titian and Tintoretto; I swear (uncooled by
'any humbug I have seen) that Venice is *the* wonder and the
'new sensation of the world! If you could be set down in it,
'never having heard of it, it would still be so. With your foot
'upon its stones, its pictures before you, and its history in your
'mind, it is something past all writing of or speaking of—almost
'past all thinking of. You couldn't talk to me in this room, nor

What he saw and felt.

Beyond pencil or pen.

'I to you, without shaking hands and saying "Good God my 'dear fellow, have we lived to see this!"' Lodi: 1844.

Five days later, Sunday the 17th, he was at Lodi, from which he wrote to me that he had been, like Leigh Hunt's pig, up 'all 'manner of streets' since he left his palazzo; that with one exception he had not on any night given up more than five hours to rest; that all the days except two had been bad ('the last two 'foggy as Blackfriars-bridge on Lord Mayor's day'); and that the cold had been dismal. But what cheerful, keen, observant eyes he carried everywhere; and, in the midst of new and unaccustomed scenes, and of objects and remains of art for which no previous study had prepared him, with what a delicate play of imagination and fancy the accuracy of his ordinary vision was exalted and refined; I think strikingly shown by the few unstudied passages I am preserving from these friendly letters. He saw everything for himself; and from mistakes in judging for himself which not all the learning and study in the world will save common men, the intuition of genius almost always saved him. Hence there is hardly anything uttered by him, of this much-trodden and wearisomely-visited, but eternally beautiful and interesting country, that will not be found worth listening to. 17th November. Refining influences.

'I am already brim-full of cant about pictures, and shall be 'happy to enlighten you on the subject of the different schools, 'at any length you please. It seems to me that the preposterous 'exaggeration in which our countrymen delight in reference to 'this Italy, hardly extends to the really good things.* Perhaps Paintings.

* Four months later, after he had seen the galleries at Rome and the other great cities, he sent me a remark which has since had eloquent reinforcement from critics of undeniable authority. 'The most famous of the 'oil paintings in the Vatican you know 'through the medium of the finest 'line-engravings in the world; and as 'to some of them I must doubt, if you 'had seen them with me, whether you 'might not think you had lost little in 'having only known them hitherto in 'that translation. Where the drawing is poor and meagre, or alloyed 'by time,—it is so, and it must be, 'often; though no doubt it is a heresy 'to hint at such a thing,—the engraving presents the forms and the idea 'to you, in a simple majesty which 'such defects impair. Where this is 'not the case, and all is stately and 'harmonious, still it is somehow in the 'very grain and nature of a delicate 'engraving to suggest to you (I think) 'the utmost delicacy, finish, and refinement, as belonging to the original. 'Therefore, though the Picture in this Engravings.

Lodi: 1844.

Titian's Assumption.

'it is in its nature, that there it should fall short. I have n
'yet seen any praise of Titian's great picture of the Assum
'of the Virgin at Venice, which soared half as high as
'beautiful and amazing reality. It is perfection. Tintore
'picture too, of the Assembly of the Blest, at Venice also,
'all the lines in it (it is of immense size and the figures
'countless) tending majestically and dutifully to Almighty
'in the centre, is grand and noble in the extreme. There are
'some wonderful portraits there, besides; and some confused,
'and hurried, and slaughterous battle pieces, in which the sur-
'prising art that presents the generals to your eye, so that it is
'almost impossible you can miss them in a crowd though they
'are in the thick of it, is very pleasant to dwell upon. I have
'seen some delightful pictures; and some (at Verona and
'Mantua) really too absurd and ridiculous even to laugh at.
'Hampton-court is a fool to 'em—and oh there are some rum
''uns there, my friend. Some werry rum 'uns. . . . Two things
'are clear to me already. One is, that the rules of art are much

Works of Tintoretto.

'latter case will greatly charm and
'interest you, it does not take you by
'surprise. You are quite prepared
'beforehand for the fullest excellence
'of which it is capable.' In the same letter he wrote of what remained always a delight in his memory, the charm of the more private collections. He found magnificent portraits and paintings in the private palaces, where he thought them seen to greater advantage than in galleries; because in numbers not so large as to distract attention or confuse the eye. 'There are portraits in-
'numerable by Titian, Rubens, Rem-
'brandt and Vandyke; heads by
'Guido, and Domenichino, and Carlo
'Dolci; subjects by Raphael, and
'Correggio, and Murillo, and Paul
'Veronese, and Salvator; which it
'would be difficult indeed to praise
'too highly, or to praise enough. It
'is a happiness to me to think that
'they cannot be felt, as they should
'be felt, by the profound connoisseurs
'who fall into fits upon the longest
'notice and the most unreasonable
'terms. Such tenderness and grace,
'such noble elevation, purity, and
'beauty, so shine upon me from some
'well-remembered spots in the walls
'of these galleries, as to relieve my
'tortured memory from legions of
'whining friars and waxy holy families.
'I forgive, from the bottom of my
'soul, whole orchestras of earthy
'angels, and whole groves of St.
'Sebastians stuck as full of arrows
'according to pattern as a lying-in
'pincushion is stuck with pins. And
'I am in no humour to quarrel even
'with that priestly infatuation, or
'priestly doggedness of purpose, which
'persists in reducing every mystery of
'our religion to some literal develop-
'ment in paint and canvas, equally
'repugnant to the reason and the
'sentiment of any thinking man.'

Private galleries.

'too slavishly followed; making it a pain to you, when you go 'into galleries day after day, to be so very precisely sure where 'this figure will be turning round, and that figure will be lying 'down, and that other will have a great lot of drapery twined 'about him, and so forth. This becomes a perfect nightmare. 'The second is, that these great men, who were of necessity very 'much in the hands of the monks and priests, painted monks and 'priests a vast deal too often. I constantly see, in pictures of 'tremendous power, heads quite below the story and the painter; 'and I invariably observe that those heads are of the convent 'stamp, and have their counterparts, exactly, in the convent 'inmates of this hour. I see the portraits of monks I know at 'Genoa, in all the lame parts of strong paintings: so I have 'settled with myself that in such cases the lameness was not with 'the painter, but with the vanity and ignorance of his employers, 'who *would* be apostles on canvas at all events.' *

Lodi: 1844. Conventionalities. Monks and painters.

In the same letter he described the Inns. 'It is a great thing '—quite a matter of course—with English travellers, to decry the 'Italian inns. Of course you have no comforts that you are used 'to in England; and travelling alone, you dine in your bedroom 'always: which is opposed to our habits. But they are immeasurably better than you would suppose. The attendants are 'very quick; very punctual; and so obliging, if you speak to 'them politely, that you would be a beast not to look cheerful, 'and take everything pleasantly. I am writing this in a room 'like a room on the two-pair front of an unfinished house in 'Eaton-square: the very walls make me feel as if I were a bricklayer distinguished by Mr. Cubitt with the favour of having it 'to take care of. The windows won't open, and the doors won't 'shut; and these latter (a cat could get in, between them and the 'floor) have a windy command of a colonnade which is open to 'the night, so that my slippers positively blow off my feet, and 'make little circuits in the room—like leaves. There is a very 'ashy wood-fire, burning on an immense hearth which has no 'fender (there is no such thing in Italy); and it only knows two

Inns. A place of entertainment. Wood fires.

* The last two lines he has printed in the *Pictures*, p. 249, 'certain of' being inserted before 'his employers.'

Lodi: 1844.

extremes—an agony of heat when wood is put on, and an agony of cold when it has been on two minutes. There is also an uncomfortable stain in the wall, where the fifth door (not being strictly indispensable) was walled up a year or two ago, and never painted over. But the bed is clean; and I have had an excellent dinner; and without being obsequious or servile, which is not at all the characteristic of the people in the North of Italy, the waiters are so amiably disposed to invent little attentions which they suppose to be English, and are so light-hearted and goodnatured, that it is a pleasure to have to do with them. But so it is with all the people. Vetturino-travelling involves a stoppage of two hours in the middle of the day, to bait the horses. At that time I always walk on. If there are many turns in the road, I necessarily have to ask my way, very often: and the men are such gentlemen, and the women such ladies, that it is quite an interchange of courtesies.'

Compensations.

Brave C of his *Pictures.*

Of the help his courier continued to be to him I had whimsical instances in almost every letter, but he appears too often in the published book to require such celebration here. He is however an essential figure to two little scenes sketched for me at Lodi, and I may preface them by saying that Louis Roche, a native of Avignon, justified to the close his master's high opinion. He was again engaged for nearly a year in Switzerland, and soon after, poor fellow, though with a jovial robustness of look and breadth of chest that promised unusual length of days, was killed by heart-disease. 'The brave C continues to be a prodigy. He puts out my clothes at every inn as if I were going to stay there twelve months; calls me to the instant every morning; lights the fire before I get up; gets hold of roast fowls and produces them in coaches at a distance from all other help, in hungry moments; and is invaluable to me. He is such a good fellow, too, that little rewards don't spoil him. I always give him, after I have dined, a tumbler of Sauterne or Hermitage or whatever I may have; sometimes (as yesterday) when we have come to a public-house at about eleven o'clock, very cold, having started before day-break and had nothing, I make him take his breakfast with

Louis Roche of Avignon.

Master and servant.

'me; and this renders him only more anxious than ever, by 'redoubling attentions, to show me that he thinks he has got a 'good master . . . I didn't tell you that the day before I left 'Genoa, we had a dinner-party—our English consul and his wife; 'the banker; Sir George Crawford and his wife; the De la 'Rues; Mr. Curry; and some others, fourteen in all. At about 'nine in the morning, two men in immense paper caps enquired 'at the door for the brave C, who presently introduced them in 'triumph as the Governor's cooks, his private friends, who had 'come to dress the dinner! Jane wouldn't stand this, however; 'so we were obliged to decline. Then there came, at half-hourly 'intervals, six gentlemen having the appearance of English 'clergymen, being other private friends who had come to wait . . . 'We accepted *their* services; and you never saw anything so 'nicely and quietly done. He had asked, as a special distinction, 'to be allowed the supreme control of the dessert; and he had 'ices made like fruit, had pieces of crockery turned upside down 'so as to look like other pieces of crockery non-existent in this 'part of Europe, and carried a case of tooth-picks in his pocket. 'Then his delight was, to get behind Kate at one end of the 'table, to look at me at the other, and to say to Georgy in a low 'voice whenever he handed her anything, "What does master '"think of datter 'rangement? Is he cŏntĕnt?" . . . . . If you 'could see what these fellows of couriers are when their families 'are not upon the move, you would feel what a prize he is. I 'can't make out whether he was ever a smuggler, but nothing 'will induce him to give the custom-house-officers anything: in 'consequence of which that portmanteau of mine has been un- 'necessarily opened twenty times. Two of them will come to the 'coach-door, at the gate of a town. "Is there anything contra- '"band in this carriage, signore?"—"No, no. There's nothing '"here. I am an Englishman, and this is my servant." "A '"buono mano signore?" "Roche," (in English) "give him '"something, and get rid of him." He sits unmoved. "A buono '"mano signore?" "Go along with you!" says the brave C. '"Signore, I am a custom-house-officer!" "Well, then, more '"shame for you!"—he always makes the same answer. And

Lodi: 1844.

Dinner at the Pes-chiere.

Resources of a courier.

Custom-house officers.

LODI: 1844.

'then he turns to me and says in English: while the custo
'house-officer's face is a portrait of anguish framed in the coa
'window, from his intense desire to know what is being told
'his disparagement: "Datter chip," shaking his fist at him,
'"greatest tief—and you know it you rascal—as never did en-r
'"me so, that I cannot bear myself!" I suppose chip to m
'chap, but it may include the custom-house-officer's father
'have some reference to the old block, for anything I distin
'know.'

MILAN: 18th November.

He closed his Lodi letter next day at Milan, whither his
and her sister had made an eighty miles journey from Genoa
pass a couple of days with him in Prospero's old Dukedom bef
he left for London. 'We shall go our several ways on Thurs
'morning, and I am still bent on appearing at Cuttris's on Sun
'the first, as if I had walked thither from Devonshire-terrace.
'the meantime I shall not write to you again . . . to enhance
'pleasure (if anything *can* enhance the pleasure) of our mee
'. . . I am opening my arms so wide!' One more letter I
nevertheless; written at Strasburg on Monday night the 25th;

STRASBURG:

tell me I might look for him one day earlier, so rapid had b
his progress. He had been in bed only once, at Friburg for
or three hours, since he left Milan; and he had sledged thro
the snow on the top of the Simplon in the midst of prodigi

After passing the Simplon.

cold. 'I am sitting here *in* a wood fire, and drinking brandy
'water scalding hot, with a faint idea of coming warm in ti
'My face is at present tingling with the frost and wind, a
'suppose the cymbals may, when that turbaned turk attached
'the life guards' band has been newly clashing at them in
'James's-park. I am in hopes it may be the preliminary ag
'of returning animation.'

LONDON: 30th November.

There was certainly no want of animation when we met.
have but to write the words to bring back the eager face a
figure, as they flashed upon me so suddenly this wintry Satur
night that almost before I could be conscious of his presenc
felt the grasp of his hand. It is almost all I find it possible
remember of the brief, bright meeting. Hardly did he seem
have come when he was gone. But all that the visit proposed

Maclise R.A.

C.H. Jeens.

AT 58, LINCOLNS INN FIELDS, MONDAY THE 2ND OF DECEMBER 1844

accomplished. He saw his little book in its final form for publication; and, to a select few brought together on Monday the 2nd of December at my house, had the opportunity of reading it aloud. An occasion rather memorable, in which was the germ of those readings to larger audiences by which, as much as by his books, the world knew him in his later life; but of which no detail beyond the fact remains in my memory, and all are now dead who were present at it excepting only Mr. Carlyle and myself. Among those however who have thus passed away was one, our excellent Maclise, who, anticipating the advice of Captain Cuttle, had 'made a note of it' in pencil, which I am able here to reproduce. It will tell the reader all he can wish to know. He will see of whom the party consisted; and may be assured (with allowance for a touch of caricature to which I may claim to be considered myself as the chief and very marked victim), that in the grave attention of Carlyle, the eager interest of Stanfield and Maclise, the keen look of poor Laman Blanchard, Fox's rapt solemnity, Jerrold's skyward gaze, and the tears of Harness and Dyce, the characteristic points of the scene are sufficiently rendered. All other recollection of it is passed and gone; but that at least its principal actor was made glad and grateful, sufficient farther testimony survives. Such was the report made of it, that once more, on the pressing intercession of our friend Thomas Ingoldsby (Mr. Barham), there was a second reading to which the presence and enjoyment of Fonblanque gave new zest;* and when I expressed to Dickens, after he left us, my grief that he had had so tempestuous a journey for such brief enjoyment, he replied that the visit had been one happiness and delight to him. 'I would not recall 'an inch of the way to or from you, if it had been twenty times as 'long and twenty thousand times as wintry. It was worth any 'travel—anything! With the soil of the road in the very grain of 'my cheeks, I swear I wouldn't have missed that week, that first

STRASBURG; 1844.

A reading in Lincoln's-inn-fields.

Only two survivors.

Persons present.

Barham and Fonblanque.

Success of the visit.

* I find the evening mentioned in the diary which Mr. Barham's son quotes in his Memoir. 'December 5, '1844. Dined at Forster's with 'Charles Dickens, Stanfield, Maclise, 'and Albany Fonblanque. Dickens 'read with remarkable effect his 'Christmas story, the *Chimes*, from 'the proofs . . .' (ii. 191.)

PARIS: 1844.

'night of our meeting, that one evening of the reading at your 'rooms, aye, and the second reading too, for any easily stan- 'or conceived consideration.'

He wrote from Paris, at which he had stopped on his way back to see Macready, whom an engagement to act there with Mr. Mitchell's English company had prevented from joining us at Lincoln's-inn-fields. There had been no such frost and snow since 1829, and he gave dismal report of the city. With Macready he had gone two nights before to the Odéon to see Alexandre Dumas' *Christine* played by Madame St. George, 'once Napo- 'leon's mistress; now of an immense size, from dropsy I suppose, 'and with little weak legs which she can't stand upon. Her age 'withal, somewhere about 80 or 90. I never in my life beheld 'such a sight. Every stage conventionality she ever picked up '(and she has them all) has got the dropsy too, and is swollen and 'bloated hideously. The other actors never looked at one another, 'but delivered all their dialogues to the pit, in a manner so 'egregiously unnatural and preposterous that I couldn't make up 'my mind whether to take it as a joke or an outrage.' And then came allusion to a project we had started on the night of the reading, that a private play should be got up by us on his return from Italy. 'You and I, sir, will reform this altogether.' He had but to wait another night, however, when he saw it all reformed at the Italian opera where Grisi was singing in *Il Pirato*, and 'the 'passion and fire of a scene between her, Mario, and Fornasari, 'was as good and great as it is possible for anything operatic to 'be. They drew on one another, the two men—not like stage- 'players, but like Macready himself: and she, rushing in between 'them; now clinging to this one, now to that, now making a 'sheath for their naked swords with her arms, now tearing her 'hair in distraction as they broke away from her and plunged 'again at each other; was prodigious.' This was the theatre at which Macready was immediately to act, and where Dickens saw him next day rehearse the scene before the doge and council in *Othello*, 'not as usual facing the float but arranged on one side,' with an effect that seemed to him to heighten the reality of the scene.

With Macready at the Odéon.

Origin of our private play.

Acting at the opera.

A Macready rehearsal.

He left Paris on the night of the 13th with the malle poste, which did not reach Marseilles till fifteen hours behind its time, after three days and three nights travelling over horrible roads. Then, in a confusion between the two rival packets for Genoa, he unwillingly detained one of them more than an hour from sailing; and only managed at last to get to her just as she was moving out of harbour. As he went up the side, he saw a strange sensation among the angry travellers whom he had detained so long; heard a voice exclaim 'I am blarmed if it ain't DICKENS!' and stood in the centre of a group of *Five Americans!* But the pleasantest part of the story is that they were, one and all, glad to see him; that their chief man, or leader, who had met him in New York, at once introduced them all round with the remark, 'Personally our 'countrymen, and you, can fix it friendly sir, I do expectuate;' and that, through the stormy passage to Genoa which followed, they were excellent friends. For the greater part of the time, it is true, Dickens had to keep to his cabin; but he contrived to get enjoyment out of them nevertheless. The member of the party who had the travelling dictionary wouldn't part with it, though he was dead sick in the cabin next to my friend's; and every now and then Dickens was conscious of his fellow-travellers coming down to him, crying out in varied tones of anxious bewilderment, 'I say, what's French for a pillow?' 'Is there any Italian phrase 'for a lump of sugar? Just look, will you?' 'What the devil 'does echo mean? The garsong says echo to everything!' They were excessively curious to know, too, the population of every little town on the Cornice, and all its statistics; 'perhaps 'the very last subjects within the capacity of the human intellect,' remarks Dickens, 'that would ever present themselves to an 'Italian steward's mind. He was a very willing fellow, our 'steward; and, having some vague idea that they would like a 'large number, said at hazard fifty thousand, ninety thousand, four 'hundred thousand, when they asked about the population of a 'place not larger than Lincoln's-inn-fields. And when they said '*Non Possible!* (which was the leader's invariable reply), he 'doubled or trebled the amount; to meet what he supposed to be 'their views, and make it quite satisfactory.'

MARSEILLES: 1844.

A recognition.

Friendly Americans.

ON BOARD FOR GENOA: 1844.

Information for travellers.

VII.

LAST MONTHS IN ITALY.

1845.

Genoa: 1844.

On the 22nd of December he had resumed his ordinary Ge life; and of a letter from Jeffrey, to whom he had dedicated little book, he wrote as 'most energetic and enthusiastic. F 'sticks in his throat rather, but all the rest is quivering in 'heart. He is very much struck by the management of Lili 'story, and cannot help speaking of that; writing of it all ind 'with the freshness and ardour of youth, and not like a n 'whose blue and yellow has turned grey.' Some of its wo have been already given. 'Miss Coutts has sent Charley, with 'best of letters to me, a Twelfth Cake weighing ninety pou 'magnificently decorated; and only think of the characters, Fair- 'burn's Twelfth Night characters, being detained at the custom- 'house for Jesuitical surveillance! But these fellows are—— 'Well! never mind. Perhaps you have seen the history of the 'Dutch minister at Turin, and of the spiriting away of his daughter 'by the Jesuits? It is all true; though, like the history of our 'friend's servant,* almost incredible. But their devilry is such 'that I am assured by our consul that if, while we are in the 'south, we were to let our children go out with servants on whom 'we could not implicitly rely, these holy men would trot even 'their small feet into churches with a view to their ultimate con- 'version! It is tremendous even to see them in the streets, or 'slinking about this garden.' Of his purpose to start for the south of Italy in the middle of January, taking his wife with him, his

Jeffrey on the *Chimes*.

Suspicious characters.

Jesuit interferences

* In a previous letter he had told me that history. 'Apropos of servants, 'I must tell you of a child-bearing 'handmaiden of some friends of ours, 'a thorough out and outer, who, by 'way of expiating her sins, caused 'herself, the other day, to be received 'into the bosom of the infallible 'church. She had two marchionesses 'for her sponsors; and she is heralded 'in the Genoa newspapers as Miss 'B—, an English lady, who has re- 'pented of her errors and saved her 'soul alive.'

letter the following week told me; dwelling on all he had missed, in that first Italian Christmas, of our old enjoyments of the season in England; and closing its pleasant talk with a postscript at midnight. 'First of January, 1845. Many many many happy 'returns of the day! A life of happy years! The Baby is 'dressed in thunder, lightning, rain, and wind. His birth is 'most portentous here.' GENOA 1844. Birth of 1845.

It was of ill-omen to me, one of its earliest incidents being my only brother's death; but Dickens had a friend's true helpfulness in sorrow, and a portion of what he then wrote to me I permit myself to preserve in a note * for what it relates of his own sad experiences and solemn beliefs and hopes. The journey southward began on the 20th of January, and five days later I had a letter written from La Scala, at a little inn, 'supported on low 'brick arches like a British haystack,' the bed in their room 'like a mangle,' the ceiling without lath or plaster, nothing to speak of available for comfort or decency, and nothing particular to eat or drink. 'But for all this I have become attached to the country 'and I don't care who knows it.' They had left Pisa that morn- Travel southward. CARRARA and PISA.

* 'I feel the distance between us 'now, indeed. I would to Heaven, 'my dearest friend, that I could re- 'mind you in a manner more lively 'and affectionate than this dull sheet 'of paper can put on, that you have a 'Brother left. One bound to you by 'ties as strong as ever Nature forged. 'By ties never to be broken, weakened, 'changed in any way—but to be 'knotted tighter up, if that be possi- 'ble, until the same end comes to 'them as has come to these. That 'end but the bright beginning of a 'happier union, I believe; and have 'never more strongly and religiously 'believed (and oh! Forster, with what 'a sore heart I have thanked God for 'it) than when that shadow has fallen 'on my own hearth, and made it cold 'and dark as suddenly as in the home 'of that poor girl you tell me of . . . 'When you write to me again, the 'pain of this will have passed. No 'consolation can be so certain and so 'lasting to you as that softened and 'manly sorrow which springs up from 'the memory of the Dead. I read your 'heart as easily as if I held it in my 'hand, this moment. And I know— 'I *know*, my dear friend—that before 'the ground is green above him, you 'will be content that what was capable 'of death in him, should lie there . . . 'I am glad to think it was so easy, 'and full of peace. What can we 'hope for more, when our own time 'comes!—The day when he visited 'us in our old house is as fresh to me 'as if it had been yesterday. I re- 'member him as well as I remember 'you. . . . I have many things to say, 'but cannot say them now. Your 'attached and loving friend for life, 'and far, I hope, beyond it. C. D.' (8th of January, 1845.)

Carrara: 1845.

ing and Carrara the day before: at the latter place an ovat
awaiting him, the result of the zeal of our eccentric friend Fletc
who happened to be staying there with an English marble-n
chant.* 'There is a beautiful little theatre there, built of marl
'and they had it illuminated that night, in my honour. Th
'was really a very fair opera: but it is curious that the cho
'has been always, time out of mind, made up of labourers in
'quarries, who don't know a note of music, and sing entirely
'ear. It was crammed to excess, and I had a great reception
'deputation waiting upon us in the box, and the orchestra turn
'out in a body afterwards and serenading us at Mr. Walto

Marble theatre.

A wild journey

Between this and Rome they had a somewhat wild journey
and before Radicofani was reached, there were disturbing rum
of bandits and even uncomfortable whispers as to their nig
lodging-place. 'I really began to think we might have an ad
'ture; and as I had brought (like an ass) a bag of napoleons
'me from Genoa, I called up all the theatrical ways of letting
'pistols that I could call to mind, and was the more disposed to
'fire them through not having any.' It ended in no worse adventure, however, than a somewhat exciting dialogue with an old professional beggar at Radicofani itself, in which he was obliged to confess that he came off second-best. It transpired at a little town hanging on a hill-side, of which the inhabitants, being all of them beggars, had the habit of swooping down, like so many birds of prey, upon any carriage that approached it.

Birds of prey.

'Can you imagine' (he named a first-rate bore, for whose name I shall substitute) 'M. F. G. in a very frowsy brown cloak con-

Mr. Walton.

* 'A Yorkshireman, who talks 'Yorkshire Italian with the drollest 'and pleasantest effect; a jolly, hos- 'pitable, excellent fellow; as odd yet 'kindly a mixture of shrewdness and 'simplicity as I have ever seen. He 'is the only Englishman in these parts 'who has been able to erect an 'English household out of Italian 'servants, but he has done it to ad- 'miration.' (25th Jan. 1845.)

† Do you think,' he wrote from Ronciglione on the 29th January, 'in 'your state room, when the fog makes 'your white blinds yellow, and the 'wind howls in the brick and mortar 'gulf behind that square perspective, 'with a middle distance of two ladder- 'tops and a back-ground of Drury-lane 'sky—when the wind howls, I say, 'as if its eldest brother, born in Lin- 'coln's-inn-fields, had gone to sea 'and was making a fortune on the 'Atlantic—at such times do you ever 'think of houseless Dick?'

'cealing his whole figure, and with very white hair and a very 'white beard, darting out of this place with a long staff in his 'hand, and begging? There he was, whether you can or not; 'out of breath with the rapidity of his dive, and staying with his 'staff all the Radicofani boys, that he might fight it out with me 'alone. It was very wet, and so was I: for I had kept, according 'to custom, my box-seat. It was blowing so hard that I could 'scarcely stand; and there was a custom-house on the spot, 'besides. Over and above all this, I had no small money; and 'the brave C. never has, when I want it for a beggar. When I 'had excused myself several times, he suddenly drew himself up 'and said, with a wizard look (fancy the aggravation of M. F. G. 'as a wizard!) "Do you know what you are doing, my lord? '"Do you mean to go on to-day?" "Yes," I said, "I do." '"My lord," he said, "do you know that your vetturino is un- '"acquainted with this part of the country; that there is a '"wind raging on the mountain, which will sweep you away; '"that the courier, the coach, and all the passengers, were blown '"from the road last year; and that the danger is great and '"almost certain?" "No," I said, "I don't." "My lord, you '"don't understand me, I think?" "Yes I do, d—— you!" 'nettled by this (you feel it? I confess it). "Speak to my '"servant. It's his business. Not mine"—for he really was 'too like M. F. G. to be borne. If you could have seen him!— '"Santa Maria, these English lords! It's not their business if '"they're killed! They leave it to their servants!" He drew 'off the boys; whispered them to keep away from the heretic; 'and ran up the hill again, almost as fast as he had come down. 'He stopped at a little distance as we moved on; and pointing to 'Roche with his long staff cried loudly after me, "It's *his* business '"if you're killed, is it, my lord? Ha! ha! ha! whose business '"is it when the English lords are born! Ha! ha! ha!" The 'boys taking it up in a shrill yell, I left the joke and them at this 'point. But I must confess that I thought he had the best of it. 'And he had so far reason for what he urged, that when we got 'on the mountain pass the wind became terrific, so that we were 'obliged to take Kate out of the carriage lest she should be blown

RADICOFANI: 1845.

A beggar and his staff.

Warning to my lord.

My lord loses temper:

and has the worst of it.

RADICOFANI: 1845.

'over, carriage and all, and had ourselves to hang on to it, on 'windy side, to prevent its going Heaven knows where!'

At Rome.

The first impression of Rome was disappointing. It was evening of the 30th of January, and the cloudy sky, dull cold and muddy footways, he was prepared for; but he was not pared for the long streets of commonplace shops and houses Paris or any other capital, the busy people, the equipages, ordinary walkers up and down. 'It was no more my Ro 'degraded and fallen and lying asleep in the sun among a hea 'ruins, than Lincoln's-inn-fields is. So I really went to bed 'very indifferent humour.' That all this yielded to later

First and second thoughts.

worthier impressions I need hardly say; and he had never in life, he told me afterwards, been so moved or overcome by sight as by that of the Coliseum, 'except perhaps by the first 'templation of the Falls of Niagara.' He went to Naples for interval before the holy week; and his first letter from it wa say that he had found the wonderful aspects of Rome befor left, and that for loneliness and grandeur of ruin nothing could transcend the southern side of the Campagna. But farther and farther south the weather had become worse; and for a week before his letter (the 11th of February), the only bright sky he had seen was just as the sun was coming up across the sea at Terracina. 'Of which place, a beautiful one, you can get a very good idea by 'imagining something as totally unlike the scenery in *Fra Diavolo*

Bay of Naples.

'as possible.' He thought the bay less striking at Naples than at Genoa, the shape of the latter being more perfect in its beauty, and the smaller size enabling you to see it all at once, and feel it more like an exquisite picture. The city he conceived the greatest dislike to.* 'The condition of the common people here

* He makes no mention in his book of the pauper burial-place at Naples, to which the reference made in his letters is striking enough for preservation. 'In Naples, the burying place 'of the poor people is a great paved 'yard with three hundred and sixty-'five pits in it: every one covered by 'a square stone which is fastened 'down. One of these pits is opened 'every night in the year; the bodies 'of the pauper dead are collected in 'the city; brought out in a cart (like 'that I told you of at Rome); and 'flung in, uncoffined. Some lime is 'then cast down into the pit; and it 'is sealed up until a year is past, and 'its turn again comes round. Every 'night there is a pit opened; and 'every night that same pit is sealed up.

A burial-place.

'is abject and shocking. I am afraid the conventional idea of the 'picturesque is associated with such misery and degradation that 'a new picturesque will have to be established as the world goes 'onward. Except Fondi there is nothing on earth that I have seen 'so dirty as Naples. I don't know what to liken the streets to 'where the mass of the lazzaroni live. You recollect that favourite 'pig-stye of mine near Broadstairs? They are more like streets 'of such apartments heaped up story on story, and tumbled house 'on house, than anything else I can think of, at this moment.' In a later letter he was even less tolerant. 'What would I give that 'you should see the lazzaroni as they really are—mere squalid, 'abject, miserable animals for vermin to batten on; slouching, 'slinking, ugly, shabby, scavenging scarecrows! And oh the raffish 'counts and more than doubtful countesses, the noodles and the 'blacklegs, the good society! And oh the miles of miserable 'streets and wretched occupants,* to which Saffron-hill or the 'Borough-mint is a kind of small gentility, which are found to be so 'picturesque by English lords and ladies; to whom the wretched- 'ness left behind at home is lowest of the low, and vilest of the 'vile, and commonest of all common things. Well! well! I have

NAPLES: 1845.

Filth of Fondi and Naples.

Lazzaroni.

False picturesque.

'again, for a twelvemonth. The cart 'has a red lamp attached, and at about 'ten o'clock at night you see it glaring 'through the streets of Naples: stop- 'ping at the doors of hospitals and 'prisons, and such places, to increase 'its freight: and then rattling off 'again. Attached to the new ceme- 'tery (a very pretty one, and well- 'kept: immeasurably better in all 'respects than Père-la-Chaise) there 'is another similar yard, but not so 'large.' . . . In connection with the same subject he adds: 'About 'Naples, the dead are borne along 'the street, uncovered, on an open 'bier; which is sometimes hoisted on 'a sort of palanquin, covered with a 'cloth of scarlet and gold. This ex- 'posure of the deceased is not peculiar 'to that part of Italy; for about mid- 'way between Rome and Genoa we 'encountered a funeral procession at- 'tendant on the body of a woman, 'which was presented in its usual 'dress, to my eyes (looking from my 'elevated seat on the box of a travel- 'ling carriage) as if she were alive, 'and resting on her bed. An at- 'tendant priest was chanting lustily— 'and as badly as the priests invariably 'do. Their noise is horrible. . . .'

* 'Thackeray praises the people of 'Italy for being kind to brutes. There 'is probably no country in the world 'where they are treated with such 'frightful cruelty. It is universal.' (Naples, 2nd Feb. 1845.) Emphatic confirmation of this remark has been lately given by the Naples correspondent of the *Times*, writing under date of February 1872.

Unkindness to animals

NAPLES: 1845.

'often thought that one of the best chances of immortality f
'writer is in the Death of his language, when he immediately
'comes good company: and I often think here,—What
What makes good company. 'you say to these people, milady and milord, if they spoke o
'the homely dictionary of your own "lower orders."' He
again at Rome on Sunday the second of March.

Sad news from me as to a common and very dear friend awa
him there; but it is a subject on which I may not dwell fa
Sad English news. than to say that there arose from it much to redeem even su
sorrow, and that this I could not indicate better than by t
wise and tender words from Dickens. 'No philosophy will
'these dreadful things, or make a moment's head against t
'but the practical one of doing all the good we can, in tho
'and deed. While we can, God help us! ourselves stray
'ourselves so easily; and there are all around us such fri
'calamities besetting the world in which we live; nothing
'will carry us through it. . . . What a comfort to reflect on
True friends in calamity. 'you tell me. Bulwer Lytton's conduct is that of a generous and
'noble-minded man, as I have ever thought him. Our dear good
'Procter too! And Thackeray—how earnest they have all been!
'I am very glad to find you making special mention of Charles
'Lever. I am glad over every name you write. It says some-
'thing for our pursuit, in the midst of all its miserable disputes
'and jealousies, that the common impulse of its followers, in such
'an instance as this, is surely and certainly of the noblest.'

FLORENCE. After the ceremonies of the holy week, of which the descriptions sent to me were reproduced in his book, he went to Florence,*

* The reader will perhaps think with me that what he noticed, on the roads in Tuscany more than in any others, of wayside crosses and religious memorials, may be worth preserving.
Wayside memorials. . . . 'You know that in the streets
'and corners of roads, there are all
'sorts of crosses and similar memorials
'to be seen in Italy. The most curious
'are, I think, in Tuscany. There is
'very seldom a figure on the cross,
'though there is sometimes a face;
'but they are remarkable for being
'garnished with little models in wood
'of every possible object that can be
'connected with the Saviour's death.
'The cock that crowed when Peter had
'denied his master thrice, is generally
'perched on the tip-top; and an orni-
'thological phenomenon he always is.
'Under him is the inscription. Then,
'hung on to the cross-beam, are the
'spear, the reed with the sponge of
'vinegar and water at the end, the

which lived always afterwards in his memory with Venice, and with Genoa. He thought these the three great Italian cities. FLORENCE 1845.

'There are some places here,*—oh Heaven how fine! I wish you 'could see the tower of the palazzo Vecchio as it lies before me 'at this moment, on the opposite bank of the Arno! But I will 'tell you more about it, and about all Florence, from my shady 'arm-chair up among the Peschiere oranges. I shall not be sorry 'to sit down in it again. . . . Poor Hood, poor Hood! I still 'look for his death, and he still lingers on. And Sydney Smith's 'brother gone after poor dear Sydney himself! Maltby will 'wither when he reads it; and poor old Rogers will contradict 'some young man at dinner, every day for three weeks."

Death of Bobus Smith.

Before he left Florence (on the 4th of April) I heard of a 'very

'coat without seam for which the 'soldiers cast lots, the dice-box with 'which they threw for it, the hammer 'that drove in the nails, the pincers 'that pulled them out, the ladder 'which was set against the cross, the 'crown of thorns, the instrument of 'flagellation, the lantern with which 'Mary went to the tomb—I suppose; 'I can think of no other—and the 'sword with which Peter smote the 'high priest's servant. A perfect toy-'shop of little objects; repeated at 'every four or five miles all along the 'highway.'

* Of his visit to Fiesole I have spoken in my LIFE OF LANDOR. 'Ten years after Landor had lost this 'home, an Englishman travelling in 'Italy, his friend and mine, visited the 'neighbourhood for his sake, drove 'out from Florence to Fiesole, and 'asked his coachman which was the 'villa in which the Landor family 'lived. "He was a dull dog, and '"pointed to Boccaccio's. I didn't '"believe him. He was so deuced '"ready that I knew he lied. I went '"up to the convent, which is on a '"height, and was leaning over a '"dwarf wall basking in the noble '"view over a vast range of hill and '"valley, when a little peasant girl '"came up and began to point out '"the localities. *Ecco la villa Lan-*'*dora!* was one of the first half-'"dozen sentences she spoke. My '"heart swelled as Landor's would '"have done when I looked down '"upon it, nestling among its olive-'"trees and vines, and with its upper '"windows (there are five above the '"door) open to the setting sun. '"Over the centre of these there is '"another story, set upon the house-'"top like a tower; and all Italy, '"except its sea, is melted down into '"the glowing landscape it com-'"mands. I plucked a leaf of ivy '"from the convent-garden as I '"looked; and here it is. For '"Landor. With my love." So 'wrote Mr. Dickens to me from 'Florence on the 2nd of April 1845; 'and when I turned over Landor's 'papers in the same month after an 'interval of exactly twenty years, the 'ivy leaf was found carefully enclosed, 'with the letter in which I had sent 'it.' Dickens had asked him before leaving what he would most wish to have in remembrance of Italy. 'An 'ivy-leaf from Fiesole,' said Landor.

Visit to Landor's villa.

Ivy leaf from Fiesole.

GENOA: 1845.

'pleasant and very merry day' at Lord Holland's; and I ou[ght] to have mentioned how much he was gratified at Naples, by [the] attentions of the English Minister there, Mr. Temple, L[ord] Palmerston's brother, whom he described as a man supreme[ly] agreeable, with everything about him in perfect taste, and w[ith] that truest gentleman-manner which has its root in kindness a[nd] generosity of nature. He was back at home in the Peschi[ere] on Wednesday the ninth of April. Here he continued to w[rite] to me every week, for as long as he remained, of whatever [he] had seen: with no definite purpose as yet, but the pleasure of interchanging with myself the impressions and emotions under-gone by him. 'Seriously,' he wrote to me on the 13th of Ap[ril], 'it is a great pleasure to me to find that you are really plea[sed] 'with these shadows in the water, and think them worth [the] 'looking at. Writing at such odd places, and in such [cold] 'seasons, I have been half savage with myself, very often, for [not] 'doing better. But d'Orsay, from whom I had a charming lett[er] 'three days since, seems to think as you do of what he has read 'in those shown to him, and says they remind him vividly of the 'real aspect of these scenes. . . . Well, if we should determine 'after we have sat in council, that the experiences they relate are 'to be used, we will call B. and E. to their share and voice in the 'matter.' Shortly before he left, the subject was again referred to (7th of June). 'I am in as great doubt as you about the letters 'I have written you with these Italian experiences. I cannot 'for the life of me devise any plan of using them to my own 'satisfaction, and yet think entirely with you that in some form 'I ought to use them.' Circumstances not in his contemplation at this time settled the form they ultimately took.

At Lord Holland's.

Shadows in the water.

To publish or not?

Two more months were to finish his Italian holiday, and I do not think he enjoyed any part of it so much as its close. He had formed a real friendship for Genoa, was greatly attached to the social circle he had drawn round him there, and liked rest after his travel all the more for the little excitement of living its activities over again, week by week, in these letters to me. And so, from his 'shady arm-chair up among the Peschiere oranges,' I had at regular intervals what he called his rambling talk; went

Weekly letters.

over with him again all the roads he had taken; and of the more important scenes and cities, such as Venice, Rome, and Naples, received such rich filling-in to the first outlines sent, as fairly justified the title of *Pictures* finally chosen for them. The weather all the time too had been without a flaw. 'Since our 'return,' he wrote on the 27th of April, 'we have had charming 'spring days. The garden is one grove of roses; we have left 'off fires; and we breakfast and dine again in the great hall, 'with the windows open. To-day we have rain, but rain was 'rather wanted I believe, so it gives offence to nobody. As far 'as I have had an opportunity of judging yet, the spring is the 'most delightful time in this country. But for all that, I am 'looking with eagerness to the tenth of June, impatient to renew 'our happy old walks and old talks in dear old home.'

GENOA: 1845.

Italy's best season.

Of incidents during these remaining weeks there were few, but such as he mentioned had in them points of humour or character still worth remembering.* Two men were hanged in the city; and two ladies of quality, he told me, agreed to keep up for a time a prayer for the souls of these two miserable creatures so incessant that Heaven should never for a moment be left alone: to which end 'they relieved each other' after such wise, that, for the whole of the stated time, one of them was always on her knees in the cathedral church of San Lorenzo. From which he inferred that 'a morbid sympathy for criminals is not wholly 'peculiar to England, though it affects more people in that 'country perhaps than in any other.'

Morbid sympathies.

Of Italian usages to the dead some notices from his letters

* One message sent me, though all to whom it refers have now passed away, I please myself by thinking may still, where he might most have desired it, be the occasion of pleasure. '. . . 'Give my love to Colden, and tell him 'if he leaves London before I return 'I will ever more address him and 'speak of him as *Colonel* Colden. 'Kate sends *her* love to him also, and 'we both entreat him to say all the 'affectionate things he can spare for 'third parties—using so many himself '—when he writes to Mrs. Colden: 'whom you ought to know, for she, 'as I have often told you, is BRILLIANT. I would go five hundred 'miles to see her for five minutes. I 'am deeply grieved by poor Felton's 'loss. His letter is manly, and of a 'most rare kind in the dignified com-'posure and silence of his sorrow.' (See *ante*, 222, 226).

Genoa: 1845.

English residents.

have been given, and he had an example before he left of the way in which they affected English residents. A gentleman of his friend Fletcher's acquaintance living four miles from Genoa had the misfortune to lose his wife; and no attendance on the dead beyond the city gate, nor even any decent conveyance, being practicable, the mourner, to whom Fletcher had promised nevertheless the sad satisfaction of an English funeral, which he had meanwhile taken enormous secret pains to arrange with a small Genoese upholsterer, was waited upon, on the appointed morning, by a very bright yellow hackney-coach-and-pair driven by a coachman in yet brighter scarlet knee-breeches and waistcoat, who wanted to put the husband and the body inside together. 'They were obliged to leave one of the coach-doors 'open for the accommodation even of the coffin; the widower 'walked beside the carriage to the Protestant cemetery; and Fletcher followed on a big grey horse.' *.

A funeral hearse.

Scarlet breeches reappear, not less characteristically, in what his next letter told of a couple of English travellers who took possession at this time (24th of May) of a portion of the ground

* 'It matters little now,' says Dickens, after describing this incident in one of his minor writings, 'for 'coaches of all colours are alike to 'poor Kindheart, and he rests far 'north of the little cemetery with the 'cypress trees, by the city walls where 'the Mediterranean is so beautiful.' Since my first volume, I observe allusion made to Fletcher's mother, in Crabb Robinson's *Diary*, as formerly a lady of great renown in Scotland, whose husband, the friend of Jeffrey, Horner, and Brougham in their early days, had been counsel for Joseph Gerrald in 1793. 'She was an Eng- 'lish beauty and heiress. Brougham 'eulogizes her in his collected speeches. 'I knew her 30 years ago at Mrs. 'Barbauld's. . . . She is excellent in 'conversation.' (*Diary*, 1844, iii. 259.) Her Autobiography has been lately published by her daughter. Since my early editions I have found a letter from Dickens on Fletcher's death in 1862. 'Poor Fletcher is dead. 'Just as I am closing my letter I 'hear the sad story. He had been 'taken suddenly ill near the railway 'station at Leeds, and being acci- 'dentally recognized by one of the 'railway men was carried to the 'Infirmary, where the doctor ob- 'tained his sister Lady Richardson's 'address, and wrote to her. She ar- 'rived to find him in a dangerous 'state, and after lingering four days 'he died. Poor Kindheart! I think 'of all that made him so pleasant to 'us, and am full of grief.' From another sure source I know that every possible attention was paid to him, and that for the last three days, together with his sister, his brother-in-law Sir John Richardson was in attendance.

Angus Fletcher. *ante*, 175.

floor of the Peschiere. They had with them a meek English footman who immediately confided to Dickens's servants, among other personal grievances, the fact that he was made to do everything, even cooking, in crimson breeches; which in a hot climate, he protested, was 'a grinding of him down.' 'He is a poor soft 'country fellow; and his master locks him up at night, in a 'basement room with iron bars to the window. Between which 'our servants poke wine in, at midnight. His master and 'mistress buy old boxes at the curiosity shops, and pass their 'lives in lining 'em with bits of parti-coloured velvet. A droll 'existence, is it not? We are lucky to have had the palace to 'ourselves until now, but it is so large that we never see or hear 'these people; and I should not have known even, if they had 'not called upon us, that another portion of the ground floor had 'been taken by some friends of old Lady Holland—whom I 'again seem to see crying about dear Sydney Smith, behind 'that green screen as we last saw her together.' *

GENOA: 1845.

Complaint of meek footman.

His employers.

A remembrance of Lady Holland.

Then came a little incident also characteristic. An English ship of war, the Fantôme, appeared in the harbour; and from her commander, Sir Frederick Nicolson, Dickens received, among attentions very pleasant to him, an invitation to lunch on board and bring his wife, for whom, at a time appointed, a boat was to be sent to the Ponte Reale (the royal bridge). But no boat being there at the time, Dickens sent off his servant in another boat to the ship to say he feared some mistake. 'While we were walking 'up and down a neighbouring piazza in his absence, a brilliant 'fellow in a dark blue shirt with a white hem to it all round the 'collar, regular corkscrew curls, and a face as brown as a berry, 'comes up to me and says "Beg your pardon sir—Mr. Dickens?" '"Yes." "Beg your pardon sir, but I'm one of the ship's '"company of the Phantom sir, cox'en of the cap'en's gig sir, '"she's a lying off the pint sir—been there half an hour." '"Well but my good fellow," I said, "you're at the wrong '"place!" "Beg your pardon sir, I was afeerd it was the '"wrong place sir, but I've asked them Genoese here sir, twenty

Nautical incident

* Sydney died on the 22nd of February ('45), in his 77th year.

Genoa: 1845.

A touch of Portsmouth.

'"times if it was Port Real; and they knows no more than a '"dead jackass!"—Isn't it a good thing to have made a regular 'Portsmouth name of it?'

That was in his letter of the 1st of June; which began by telling me it had been twice begun and twice flung into the basket, so great was his indisposition to write as the time for departure came, and which ended thus. 'The fire-flies at night now, are 'miraculously splendid; making another firmament among the 'rocks on the sea-shore, and the vines inland. They get into 'the bedrooms, and fly about, all night, like beautiful little 'lamps.* . . . I have surrendered much I had fixed my heart 'upon, as you know, admitting you have had reason for not 'coming to us here: but I stand by the hope that you and Mac 'will come and meet us at Brussels; it being so very easy. A 'day or two there, and at Antwerp, would be very happy for us; 'and we could still dine in Lincoln's-inn-fields on the day of 'arrival.' I had been unable to join him in Genoa, urgently as he had wished it: but what is said here was done, and Jerrold was added to the party.

Fire-flies at night.

Last letter.

His last letter from Genoa was written on the 7th of June, not from the Peschiere, but from a neighbouring palace, 'Brignole 'Rosso,' into which he had fled from the miseries of moving. 'They are all at sixes and sevens up at the Peschiere, as you 'may suppose; and Roche is in a condition of tremendous 'excitement, engaged in settling the inventory with the house-'agent, who has just told me he is the devil himself. I had been 'appealed to, and had contented myself with this expression of

Closing excitements:

* A remark on this, made in my reply, elicited what follows in a letter during his travel home: 'Odd enough 'that remark of yours. I had been 'wondering at Rome that Juvenal '(which I have been always lugging 'out of a bag, on all occasions) never 'used the fire-flies for an illustration. 'But even now, they are only partially 'seen; and no where I believe in such 'enormous numbers as on the Medi-'terranean coast-road, between Genoa 'and Spezzia. I will ascertain for 'curiosity's sake, whether there are 'any at this time in Rome, or between 'it and the country-house of Mæcenas '—on the ground of Horace's journey. 'I know there is a place on the French 'side of Genoa, where they begin at 'a particular boundary-line, and are 'never seen beyond it. . . . All wild 'to see you at Brussels! What a 'meeting we will have, please God!'

'opinion, "Signor Noli, you are an old impostor!" "Illustris- GENOA: 1845.
'"simo," said Signor Noli in reply, "your servant is the devil
'"himself: sent on earth to torture me." I look occasionally
'towards the Peschiere (it is visible from this room), expecting to
'see one of them flying out of a window. Another great cause
'of commotion is, that they have been paving the lane by which
'the house is approached, ever since we returned from Rome.
'We have not been able to get the carriage up since that time, and difficulties.
'in consequence; and unless they finish to-night, it can't be
'packed in the garden, but the things will have to be brought
'down in baskets, piecemeal, and packed in the street. To
'avoid this inconvenient necessity, the Brave made proposals of
'bribery to the paviours last night, and induced them to pledge
'themselves that the carriage should come up at seven this
'evening. The manner of doing that sort of paving work here, Italians hard at work.
'is to take a pick or two with an axe, and then lie down to sleep
'for an hour. When I came out, the Brave had issued forth to
'examine the ground; and was standing alone in the sun among
'a heap of prostrate figures: with a Great Despair depicted in
'his face, which it would be hard to surpass. It was like a
'picture—"After the Battle." Napoleon by the Brave; Bodies
'by the Paviours.'

He came home by the Great St. Gothard, and was quite Returning by Switzerland.
carried away by what he saw of Switzerland. The country was
so divine that he should have wondered indeed if its sons and
daughters had ever been other than a patriotic people. Yet,
infinitely above the country he had left as he ranked it in its
natural splendours, there was something more enchanting than
these that he lost in leaving Italy; and he expressed this delight-
fully in the letter from Lucerne (14th of June) which closes the
narrative of his Italian life.

'We came over the St. Gothard, which has been open only LUCERNE.
'eight days. The road is cut through the snow, and the carriage
'winds along a narrow path between two massive snow walls,
'twenty feet high or more. Vast plains of snow range up the
'mountain-sides above the road, itself seven thousand feet above
'the sea; and tremendous waterfalls, hewing out arches for

Lucerne: 1845.

'themselves in the vast drifts, go thundering down from precipices into deep chasms, here and there and everywhere: the blue water tearing through the white snow with an awful beauty that is most sublime. The pass itself, the mere pass over the top," is not so fine, I think, as the Simplon; and there is no plain upon the summit, for the moment it is reached the descent begins. So that the loneliness and wildness of the Simplon are not equalled *there*. But being much higher, the ascent and the descent range over a much greater space of country; and on both sides there are places of terrible grandeur, unsurpassable, I should imagine, in the world. The Devil's Bridge, terrific! The whole descent between Andermatt (where we slept on Friday night) and Altdorf, William Tell's town, which we passed through yesterday afternoon, is the highest sublimation of all you can imagine in the way of Swiss scenery. Oh God! what a beautiful country it is! How poor and shrunken, beside it, is Italy in its brightest aspect!

Passage of the St. Gothard.

Splendour of Swiss scenery:

'I look upon the coming down from the Great St. Gothard with a carriage and four horses and only one postilion, as the most dangerous thing that a carriage and horses can do. We had two great wooden logs for drags, and snapped them both like matches. The road is like a geometrical staircase, with horrible depths beneath it; and at every turn it is a toss-up, or seems to be, whether the leaders shall go round or over. The lives of the whole party may depend upon a strap in the harness; and if we broke our rotten harness once yesterday, we broke it at least a dozen times. The difficulty of keeping the horses together in the continual and steep circle, is immense. They slip and slide, and get their legs over the traces, and are dragged up against the rocks; carriage, horses, harness, all a confused heap. The Brave, and I, and the postilion, were constantly at work, in extricating the whole concern from a tangle, like a skein of thread. We broke two thick iron chains, and crushed the box of a wheel, as it was; and the carriage is now undergoing repair, under the window, on the margin of the lake: where a woman in short petticoats, a stomacher, and two immensely long tails of black hair hanging down her back very

dangers of it.

'nearly to her heels, is looking on—apparently dressed for a 'melodrama, but in reality a waitress at this establishment. LUCERNE: 1845.

'If the Swiss villages looked beautiful to me in winter, their 'summer aspect is most charming: most fascinating: most 'delicious. Shut in by high mountains capped with perpetual 'snow; and dotting a rich carpet of the softest turf, overshadowed 'by great trees; they seem so many little havens of refuge from 'the troubles and miseries of great towns. The cleanliness of the 'little baby-houses of inns is wonderful to those who come from 'Italy. But the beautiful Italian manners, the sweet language, 'the quick recognition of a pleasant look or cheerful word; the 'captivating expression of a desire to oblige in everything; are 'left behind the Alps. Remembering them, I sigh for the dirt 'again: the brick floors, bare walls, unplastered ceilings, and 'broken windows.' Swiss villages. What is left behind the Alps.

We met at Brussels; Maclise, Jerrold, myself, and the travellers; passed a delightful week in Flanders together; and were in England at the close of June.

BOOK FIFTH.

LONDON, LAUSANNE, AND PARIS.

1845—1847. ÆT. 33—35.

I. AGAIN IN ENGLAND.
II. RETREAT TO SWITZERLAND.
III. SWISS PEOPLE AND SCENERY.
IV. SKETCHES CHIEFLY PERSONAL.
V. LITERARY LABOUR AT LAUSANNE.
VI. GENEVESE REVOLUTION AND BATTLE OF LIFE.
VII. THREE MONTHS IN PARIS.

I.

AGAIN IN ENGLAND.

1845—1846.

HIS first letter after again taking possession of Devonshire-terrace revived a subject on which opinions had been from time to time interchanged during his absence, and to which there was allusion in the agreement executed before his departure. The desire was still as strong with him as when he started *Master Humphrey's Clock* to establish a periodical, that, while relieving his own pen by enabling him to receive frequent help from other writers, might yet retain always the popularity of his name. 'I 'really think I have an idea, and not a bad one, for the 'periodical. I have turned it over, the last two days, very much 'in my mind: and think it positively good. I incline still to 'weekly; price three halfpence, if possible; partly original, 'partly select; notices of books, notices of theatres, notices of all 'good things, notices of all bad ones; *Carol* philosophy, cheerful 'views, sharp anatomization of humbug, jolly good temper; 'papers always in season, pat to the time of year; and a vein of 'glowing, hearty, generous, mirthful, beaming reference in every-'thing to Home, and Fireside. And I would call it, sir,—

LONDON: 1845.

Old hopes revived.

Notion for a periodical.

> THE CRICKET.
>
> A cheerful creature that chirrups on the Hearth.
>
> *Natural History.*

'Now, don't decide hastily till you've heard what I would do. 'I would come out, sir, with a prospectus on the subject of the 'Cricket that should put everybody in a good temper, and make 'such a dash at people's fenders and arm-chairs as hasn't been 'made for many a long day. I could approach them in a

Prospectus for it.

London: 1845.

'different mode under this name, and in a more winning and 'immediate way, than under any other. I would at once sit 'down upon their very hobs; and take a personal and con- 'fidential position with them which should separate me, instantly, 'from all other periodicals periodically published, and supply a 'distinct and sufficient reason for my coming into existence. 'And I would chirp, chirp, chirp away in every number until 'I chirped it up to——well, you shall say how many hundred 'thousand! . . . Seriously, I feel a capacity in this name and 'notion which appears to give us a tangible starting-point, and a 'real, defined, strong, genial drift and purpose. I seem to feel 'that it is an aim and name which people would readily and 'pleasantly connect with *me;* and that, for a good course and a 'clear one, instead of making circles pigeon-like at starting, here 'we should be safe. I think the general recognition would be 'likely to leap at it; and of the helpful associations that could 'be clustered round the idea at starting, and the pleasant tone of 'which the working of it is susceptible, I have not the smallest 'doubt. . . . But you shall determine. What do you think? 'And what do you say? The chances are, that it will either 'strike you instantly, or not strike you at all. Which is it, my 'dear fellow? You know I am not bigoted to the first suggestions 'of my own fancy: but you know also exactly how I should use 'such a lever, and how much power I should find in it. Which 'is it? What do you say?—I have not myself said half enough. 'Indeed I have said next to nothing; but like the parrot in the 'negro-story, I "think a dam deal."'

Appeal to Home.

Its advantages.

Its drawbacks.

My objection, incident more or less to every such scheme, was the risk of losing its general advantage by making it too specially dependent on individual characteristics: but there was much in favour of the present notion, and its plan had been modified so far, in the discussions that followed, as to involve less absolute personal identification with Dickens,—when discussion, project, everything was swept away by a larger scheme, in its extent and its danger more suitable to the wild and hazardous enterprises of that prodigious year (1845) of excitement and disaster. In this more tremendous adventure, already hinted at on a previous page,

Swept away by larger venture.

we all became involved; and the chirp of the Cricket, delayed in consequence until Christmas, was heard then in circumstances quite other than those first intended. The change he thus announced to me about half way through the summer, in the same letter which told me the success of d'Orsay's kind exertion to procure a fresh engagement for his courier Roche.* 'What do you think of a notion that has occurred to me in connection with our abandoned little weekly? It would be a delicate and beautiful fancy for a Christmas book, making the Cricket a little household god—silent in the wrong and sorrow of the tale, and loud again when all went well and happy.' The reader will not need to be told that thus originated the story of the *Cricket on the Hearth*, a Fairy Tale of Home, which had a great popularity in the Christmas days of 1845. Its sale at the outset doubled that of both its predecessors.

LONDON: 1845.

Use for its fancy and name.

Christmas book of 1845.

But as yet the larger adventure has not made itself known, and the interval was occupied with the private play of which the notion had been started between us at his visit in December, and which led to his disclosure of a passage in his early career belonging to that interval between his school-days and start in life when he had to pass nearly two weary years as a reporter for one of the offices in Doctors' Commons, from which he sought relief by an attempt to get upon the stage. I had asked him, after his return to Genoa, whether he continued to think that we should have the play; and his reply began thus: 'ARE we to

* Count d'Orsay's note about Roche, replying to Dickens's recommendation of him at his return, has touches of the pleasantry, wit, and kindliness that gave such a wonderful fascination to its writer. 'Gore House, '6 July, 1845. MON CHER DICKENS, 'Nous sommes enchantés de votre 'retour. Voici, thank God, Devonshire Place ressuscité. Venez luncheoner demain à 1 heure, et amenez 'notre brave ami Forster. J'attends 'la perle fine des couriers. Vous 'l'immortalisez par ce certificat—la 'difficulté sera de trouver un maître 'digne de lui. J'essayerai de tout 'mon cœur. La Reine devroit le 'prendre pour aller en Saxe Gotha, 'car je suis convaincu qu'il est assez 'intelligent pour pouvoir découvrir ce 'Royaume. Gore House vous envoye 'un cargo d'amitiés des plus sincères. 'Donnez de ma part 100,000 kind 'regards à Madame Dickens. Tou'jours votre affectionné, C^e D'ORSAY. 'J'ai vu le courier, c'est le tableau 'de l'honnêteté, et de la bonne 'humeur. Don't forget to be here 'at one to-morrow, with Forster.'

D'Orsay and the courier.

London: 1845.

'have that play??? Have I spoken of it, ever since I came 'home from London, as a settled thing! I do not know if I 'have ever told you seriously, but I have often thought, that 'I should certainly have been as successful on the boards as I 'have been between them. I assure you, when I was on the 'stage at Montreal (not having played for years) I was as much 'astonished at the reality and ease, to myself, of what I did as if 'I had been another man. See how oddly things come about!'

Then came the interesting bit of autobiography the reader has had before him (*ante*, 58); and his account of the stage practice he had previously gone through with a view to the adventure, contained in the same letter, may be added here. 'This was at 'the time when I was at Doctors' Commons as a shorthand 'writer for the proctors. It wasn't a very good living (though not 'a *very* bad one), and was wearily uncertain; which made me 'think of the Theatre in quite a business-like way. I went to

Stage Studies.

'some theatre every night, with a very few exceptions, for at 'least three years: really studying the bills first, and going to 'where there was the best acting: and always to see Mathews 'whenever he played. I practised immensely (even such things 'as walking in and out, and sitting down in a chair): often four, 'five, six hours a day: shut up in my own room, or walking about

Rehearsing parts.

'in the fields. I prescribed to myself, too, a sort of Hamiltonian 'system for learning parts; and learnt a great number. I haven't 'even lost the habit now, for I knew my Canadian parts imme- 'diately, though they were new to me. I must have done a 'good deal: for, just as Macready found me out, they used to 'challenge me at Braham's: and Yates, who was knowing enough 'in those things, wasn't to be parried at all. It was just the 'same, that day at Keeley's, when they were getting up the '*Chuzzlewit* last June. If you think Macready would be interested 'in this Strange news from the South, tell it him. Fancy Bartley 'or Charles Kemble *now!* And how little they suspect me!'

In the later letter from Lucerne written as he was travelling home, he adds: '*Did* I ever tell you the details of my theatrical

Then and now.

'idea, before? Strange, that I should have quite forgotten it. I 'had an odd fancy, when I was reading the unfortunate little farce

'at Covent-garden, that Bartley looked as if some struggling 'recollection and connection were stirring up within him—but it 'may only have been his doubts of that humorous composition.' LONDON: 1845.

What Might have Been is a history of too little profit to be worth anybody's writing, and here there is no call even to regret how great an actor was in Dickens lost. He took to a higher calling, but it included the lower. There was no character created by him into which life and reality were not thrown with such vividness, that to his readers the thing written did not seem the thing actually done, whether the form of disguise put on by the enchanter was Mrs. Gamp, Tom Pinch, Mr. Squeers, or Fagin the Jew. He had the power of projecting himself into shapes and suggestions of his fancy which is one of the marvels of creative imagination, and what he desired to express he became. The assumptions of the theatre have the same method at a lower pitch, depending greatly on personal accident; but the accident as much as the genius favoured Dickens, and another man's conception underwent in his acting the process which in writing he applied to his own. Into both he flung himself with the passionate fullness of his nature; and though the theatre had limits for him that may be named hereafter, and he was always greater in quickness of assumption than in steadiness of delineation, there was no limit to his delight and enjoyment in the adventures of our theatrical holiday. Acting and Writing. An actor's requisites.

In less than three weeks after his return we had selected our play, cast our parts, and all but engaged our theatre; as I find by a note from my friend of the 22nd of July, in which the good natured laugh can give no offence now, since all who might have objected to it have long gone from us. Fanny Kelly, the friend of Charles Lamb, and a genuine successor to the old school of actresses in which the Mrs. Orgers and Miss Popes were bred, was not more delightful on the stage than impracticable when off, and the little theatre in Dean-street which the Duke of Devonshire's munificence had enabled her to build, and which with any ordinary good sense might handsomely have realized both its uses, as a private school for young actresses and a place of public amusement, was made useless for both by her mere whims and Play selected. Fanny Kelly's theatre.

London: 1845.

fancies. 'Heavens! such a scene as I have had with Miss Kelly 'here, this morning! She wanted us put off until the theatre 'should be cleaned and brushed up a bit, and she would and she 'would not, for she is eager to have us and alarmed when she 'thinks of us. By the foot of Pharaoh, it was a great scene! 'Especially when she choked, and had the glass of water brought. 'She exaggerates the importance of our occupation, dreads the 'least prejudice against her establishment in the minds of any of 'our company, says the place already has quite ruined her, and 'with tears in her eyes protests that any jokes at her additional 'expense in print would drive her mad. By the body of Cæsar, 'the scene was incredible! It's like a preposterous dream.'

Dickens and Fanny Kelly.

Something of our play is disclosed by the oaths à la Bobadil, and of our actors by 'the jokes' poor Miss Kelly was afraid of. We had chosen Every Man in his Humour, with special regard to the singleness and individuality of the 'humours' portrayed in it; and our company included the leaders of a journal then in its earliest years, but already not more renowned as the most successful joker of jokes yet known in England, than famous for that exclusive use of its laughter and satire for objects the highest or most harmless which makes it still so enjoyable a companion to mirth-loving right-minded men. Maclise took earnest part with us, and was to have acted, but fell away on the eve of the rehearsals; and Stanfield, who went so far as to rehearse Downright twice, then took fright and also ran away: * but Jerrold, who played Master Stephen, brought with him Lemon, who took Brainworm; Leech, to whom Master Matthew was given; A'Beckett, who had condescended to the small part of William; and Mr. Leigh, who had Oliver Cob. I played Kitely, and

Every Man in his Humour.

The company of actors.

* 'Look here! Enclosed are two 'packets—a large one and a small 'one. The small one, read first. It 'contains Stanny's renunciation as an 'actor!!! After receiving it, at 'dinner time to-day' (22nd of August), 'I gave my brains a shake, and 'thought of George Cruikshank. 'After much shaking, I made up 'the big packet, wherein I have put 'the case in the artfullest manner. 'R—r—r—r—ead it! as a certain 'Captain whom you know observes.' The great artist was not, for that time procurable, having engagements away from London, and Mr. Dudley Costello was substituted; Stanfield taking off the edge of his desertion as an actor by doing valuable work in management and scenery.

Bobadil fell to Dickens, who took upon him the redoubtable Captain long before he stood in his dress at the footlights; humouring the completeness of his assumption by talking and writing Bobadil, till the dullest of our party were touched and stirred to something of his own heartiness of enjoyment. One or two hints of these have been given, and I will only add to them his refusal of my wish that he should go and see some special performance of the *Gamester*. 'Man of the House. *Gamester!* 'By the foot of Pharaoh, I will *not* see the *Gamester*. Man shall 'not force, nor horses drag, this poor gentleman-like carcass into 'the presence of the *Gamester*. I have said it. . . . The player 'Mac hath bidden me to eat and likewise drink with him, thyself, 'and short-necked Fox to-night. An' I go not, I am a hog, and 'not a soldier. But an' thou goest not—Beware citizen! Look 'to it. . . . Thine as thou meritest. BOBADIL (Captain). Unto 'Master Kitely. These.'

LONDON: 1845.

Enjoying a character.

The play was played on the 21st of September with a success that out-ran the wildest expectation; and turned our little enterprise into one of the small sensations of the day. The applause of the theatre found so loud an echo in the press, that for the time nothing else was talked about in private circles; and after a week or two we had to yield (we did not find it difficult) to a pressure of demand for more public performance in a larger theatre, by which a useful charity received important help, and its committee showed their gratitude by an entertainment to us at the Clarendon, a month or two later, when Lord Lansdowne took the chair. There was also another performance by us at the same theatre, before the close of the year, of the *Elder Brother* by Beaumont and Fletcher. I may not farther indicate the enjoyments that attended the success, and gave always to the first of our series of performances a preeminently pleasant place in memory.

The success.

Of the thing itself, however, it is necessary to be said that a modicum of merit goes a long way in all such matters, and it would not be safe now to assume that ours was much above the average of amateur attempts in general. Lemon certainly had most of the stuff, conventional as well as otherwise, of a regular

The acting.

LONDON: 1845.

actor in him, but this was not of a high kind; and though Dickens had the title to be called a born comedian, the turn for it being in his very nature, his strength was rather in the vividness and variety of his assumptions, than in the completeness, finish, or ideality he could give to any part of them. It is expressed exactly by what he says of his youthful preference for the representations of the elder Mathews. At the same time this was in itself so thoroughly genuine and enjoyable, and had in it such quickness and keenness of insight, that of its kind it was unrivalled; and it enabled him to present in Bobadil, after a richly coloured picture of bombastical extravagance and comic exaltation in the earlier scenes, a contrast in the later of tragical humility and abasement that had a wonderful effect. But greatly as his acting contributed to the success of the night, this was nothing to the service he had rendered as manager. It would be difficult to describe it. He was the life and soul of the entire affair. I never seemed till then to have known his business capabilities. He took everything on himself, and did the whole of it without an effort. He was stage-director, very often stage-carpenter, scene-arranger, property-man, prompter, and band-master. Without offending any one he kept every one in order. For all he had useful suggestions, and the dullest of clays under his potter's hand were transformed into little bits of porcelain. He adjusted scenes, assisted carpenters, invented costumes, devised playbills, wrote out calls, and enforced as well as exhibited in his proper person everything of which he urged the necessity on others. Such a chaos of dirt, confusion, and noise, as the little theatre was the day we entered it, and such a cosmos as he made it of cleanliness, order, and silence, before the rehearsals were over! There were only two things left as we found them, bits of humanity both, understood from the first as among the fixtures of the place: a Man in a Straw Hat, tall, and very fitful in his exits and entrances, of whom we never could pierce the mystery, whether he was on guard or in possession, or what he was; and a solitary little girl, who flitted about so silently among our actors and actresses that she might have been deaf and dumb but for sudden small shrieks and starts elicited by the wonders

Dickens as performer.

As manager.

Chaos and cosmos.

going on, which obtained for her the name of Fireworks. There is such humorous allusion to both in a letter of Dickens's of a year's later date, on the occasion of the straw-hatted mystery revealing itself as a gentleman in training for the tragic stage, that it may pleasantly close for the present our private theatricals. LONDON: 1845.

'Our straw-hatted friend from Miss Kelly's! Oh my stars! 22 Nov. '46, from Paris.
'To think of him, all that time—Macbeth in disguise; Richard 'the Third grown straight; Hamlet as he appeared on his sea-'voyage to England. What an artful villain he must be, never to 'have made any sign of the melodrama that was in him! What 'a wicked-minded and remorseless Iago to have seen you doing 'Kitely night after night! raging to murder you and seize the 'part! Oh fancy Miss Kelly "getting him up" in Macbeth. 'Good Heaven! what a mass of absurdity must be shut up some 'times within the walls of that small theatre in Dean-street! Behind the scenes in Dean-street 'FIREWORKS will come out shortly, depend upon it, in the dumb 'line; and will relate her history in profoundly unintelligible 'motions that will be translated into long and complicated 'descriptions by a grey-headed father, and a red-wigged country-'man, his son. You remember the dumb dodge of relating an 'escape from captivity? Clasping the left wrist with the right 'hand, and the right wrist with the left hand—alternately (to 'express chains)—and then going round and round the stage 'very fast, and coming hand over hand down an imaginary cord: Panto-mimic. 'at the end of which there is one stroke on the drum, and a 'kneeling to the chandelier? If Fireworks can't do that—and 'won't somewhere—I'm a Dutchman.'

Graver things now claim a notice which need not be proportioned to their gravity, because, though they had an immediate effect on Dickens's fortunes, they do not otherwise form part of his story. But first let me say, he was at Broadstairs for three weeks in the autumn;* we had the private play on his return;

* Characteristic glimpse of this Broadstairs holiday is afforded by a letter of the 19th of August, 1845. 'Perhaps it is a fair specimen of the 'odd adventures which befall the 'inimitable, that the cab in which the 'children and the luggage were (I and 'my womankind being in the other) 'got its shafts broken in the city, last 'Friday morning, through the horse At Broad-stairs.

London: 1845.

His fourth son.

and a month later, on the 28th of October, a sixth child and fourth son, named Alfred Tennyson after his godfathers d'Orsay and Tennyson, was born in Devonshire-terrace. A death in the family followed, the older and more gifted of his ravens having indulged the same illicit taste for putty and paint which had been fatal to his predecessor. Voracity killed him, as it killed Scott's. He died unexpectedly before the kitchen-fire. 'He kept his eye 'to the last upon the meat as it roasted, and suddenly turned over 'on his back with a sepulchral cry of *Cuckoo!*' The letter which told me this (31st of October) announced to me also that he was at a dead lock in his Christmas story: 'Sick, bothered and 'depressed. Visions of Brighton come upon me; and I have a 'great mind to go there to finish my second part, or to Hamp-'stead. I have a desperate thought of Jack Straw's. I never 'was in such bad writing cue as I am this week, in all my life.' The reason was not far to seek. In the preparation for the proposed new Daily Paper to which reference has been made, he was now actively assisting, and had all but consented to the publication of his name.

Second raven's death.

My misgiving as to daily paper.

I entertained at this time, for more than one powerful reason,

Sea-side entertainments.

'stumbling on the greasy pavement; 'and was drawn to the wharf (about 'a mile) by a stout man, amid such 'frightful howlings and derisive yel-'lings on the part of an infuriated 'populace, as I never heard before. 'Conceive the man in the broken 'shafts with his back towards the cab; 'all the children looking out of the 'windows; and the muddy portman-'teaus and so forth (which were all 'tumbled down when the horse fell) 'tottering and nodding on the box! 'The best of it was, that *our* cabman, 'being an intimate friend of the 'damaged cabman, insisted on keep-'ing him company; and proceeded at 'a solemn walk, in front of the pro-'cession; thereby securing to me a 'liberal share of the popular curiosity 'and congratulation. . . . . Every-'thing here at Broadstairs is the same 'as of old. I have walked 20 miles 'a day since I came down, and I went 'to a circus at Ramsgate on Saturday 'night, where *Mazeppa* was played in 'three long acts without an H in it: 'as if for a wager. Evven, and edds, 'and orrors, and ands, were as plen-'tiful as blackberries; but the letter 'H was neither whispered in Evven, 'nor muttered in Ell, nor permitted 'to dwell in any form on the confines 'of the sawdust.' With this I will couple another theatrical experience of this holiday, when he saw a Giant played by a village comedian with a quite Gargantuesque felicity, and singled out for admiration his fine manner of sitting down to a hot supper (of children), with the self-lauding exalting remark, by way of grace, 'How 'pleasant is a quiet conscience and an 'approving mind!'

the greatest misgiving of his intended share in the adventure. It was not fully revealed until later on what difficult terms, physical as well as mental, Dickens held the tenure of his imaginative life; but already I knew enough to doubt the wisdom of what he was at present undertaking. In all intellectual labour, his will prevailed so strongly when he fixed it on any object of desire, that what else its attainment might exact was never duly measured; and this led to frequent strain and unconscious waste of what no man could less afford to spare. To the world gladdened by his work, its production might always have seemed quite as easy as its enjoyment; but it may be doubted if ever any man's mental effort cost him more. His habits were robust, but not his health; that secret had been disclosed to me before he went to America; and to the last he decidedly refused to admit the enormous price he had paid for his triumphs and successes. The morning after his last note I heard again. 'I have been so very unwell this 'morning, with giddiness, and headache, and botheration of one 'sort or other, that I didn't get up till noon: and, shunning 'Fleet-street' (the office of the proposed new paper), 'am now 'going for a country walk, in the course of which you will find 'me, if you feel disposed to come away in the carriage that goes 'to you with this. It is to call for a pull of the first part of the '*Cricket*, and will bring you, if you like, by way of Hampstead to 'me, and subsequently to dinner. There is much I should like 'to discuss, if you can manage it. It's the loss of my walks, I 'suppose; but I am as giddy as if I were drunk, and can hardly 'see.' I gave far from sufficient importance at the time to the frequency of complaints of this kind, or to the recurrence, at almost regular periods after the year following the present, of those spasms in the side of which he has recorded an instance in the recollections of his childhood, and of which he had an attack in Genoa; but though not conscious of it to its full extent, this consideration was among those that influenced me in a determination to endeavour to turn him from what could not but be regarded as full of peril. His health, however, had no real prominence in my letter; and it is strange now to observe that it appears as an argument in his reply. I had simply put before

LONDON: 1845.

Habits more robust than health.

Old ways interrupted.

My appeal against the enterprise.

London: 1845.

him, in the strongest form, all the considerations drawn from his genius and fame that should deter him from the labour and responsibility of a daily paper, not less than from the party and political involvements incident to it; and here was the material part of the answer made. 'Many thanks for your affectionate 'letter, which is full of generous truth. These considerations 'weigh with me, *heavily:* but I think I descry in these times, 'greater stimulants to such an effort; greater chance of some fair 'recognition of it; greater means of persevering in it, or retiring 'from it unscratched by any weapon one should care for; than at 'any other period. And most of all I have, sometimes, that 'possibility of failing health or fading popularity before me, 'which beckons me to such a venture when it comes within my 'reach. At the worst, I have written to little purpose, if I cannot '*write myself right* in people's minds, in such a case as this.'

Reply to appeal.

The issue.

And so it went on: but it does not fall within my plan to describe more than the issue, which was to be accounted so far at least fortunate that it established a journal which has advocated steadily improvements in the condition of all classes, rich as well as poor, and has been able, during late momentous occurrences, to give wider scope to its influence by its enterprise and liberality. To that result, the great writer whose name gave its earliest attraction to the *Daily News* was not enabled to contribute much; but from him it certainly received the first impress of the opinions it has since consistently maintained. Its prospectus is before me in his handwriting, but it bears upon itself sufficiently the character of his hand and mind. The paper would be kept free, it said, from personal influence or party bias; and would be devoted to the advocacy of all rational and honest means by which wrong might be redressed, just rights maintained, and the happiness and welfare of society promoted.

Prospectus written by him.

The day for the appearance of its first number was that which was to follow Peel's speech for the repeal of the corn laws; but, brief as my allusions to the subject are, the remark should be made that even before this day came there were interruptions to the work of preparation, at one time very grave, which threw such 'changes of vexation' on Dickens's personal relations to the

Interruption and renewal.

venture as went far to destroy both his faith and his pleasure in it. No opinion need be offered as to where most of the blame lay, and it would be useless now to apportion the share that might possibly have belonged to himself; but, owing to this cause, his editorial work began with such diminished ardour that its brief continuance could not but be looked for. A little note written 'before going home' at six o'clock in the morning of Wednesday the 21st of January 1846, to tell me they had 'been 'at press three quarters of an hour, and were out before the '*Times*,' marks the beginning; and a note written in the night of Monday the 9th of February, 'tired to death and quite worn out,' to say that he had just resigned his editorial functions, describes the end. I had not been unprepared. A week before (Friday 30th of January) he had written: 'I want a long talk with you. 'I was obliged to come down here in a hurry to give out a 'travelling letter I meant to have given out last night, and could 'not call upon you. Will you dine with us to-morrow at six 'sharp? I have been revolving plans in my mind this morning 'for quitting the paper and going abroad again to write a new 'book in shilling numbers. Shall we go to Rochester to-morrow 'week (my birthday) if the weather be, as it surely must be, 'better.' To Rochester accordingly we had gone, he and Mrs. Dickens and her sister, with Maclise and Jerrold and myself; going over the old Castle, Watts's Charity, and Chatham fortifications on the Saturday, passing Sunday in Cobham church and Cobham park; having our quarters both days at the Bull inn made famous in *Pickwick;* and thus, by indulgence of the desire which was always strangely urgent in him, associating his new resolve in life with those earliest scenes of his youthful time. On one point our feeling had been in thorough agreement. If long continuance with the paper was not likely, the earliest possible departure from it was desirable. But as the letters descriptive of his Italian travel (turned afterwards into *Pictures from Italy*) had begun with its first number, his name could not at once be withdrawn; and, for the time during which they were still to appear, he consented to contribute other occasional letters on important social questions. Public executions and Ragged schools were

LONDON: 1845.

The beginning and the end.

Forming new resolve.

Editorship ceased: letters continued.

London: 1845.

among the subjects chosen by him, and all were handled with conspicuous ability. But the interval they covered was a short one.

I become editor.

To the supreme control which he had quitted, I succeeded, retaining it very reluctantly for the greater part of that weary, anxious, laborious year; but in little more than four months from the day the paper started, the whole of Dickens's connection with the *Daily News*, even that of contributing letters with his signature, had ceased. As he said in the preface to the republished *Pictures*, it was a mistake, in so departing from his old pursuits, to have disturbed the old relations between himself and his readers. It had however been 'a brief mistake;' the departure had been only 'for a moment;' and now those pursuits were 'joyfully' to be resumed in Switzerland. Upon the latter point we had much discussion; but he was bent on again removing himself from London, and his glimpse of the Swiss mountains on his coming from Italy had given him a passion to visit them again. 'I don't 'think,' he wrote to me, 'I *could* shut out the paper sufficiently, 'here, to write well. No . . . I will write my book in Lausanne 'and in Genoa, and forget everything else if I can; and by living 'in Switzerland for the summer, and in Italy or France for the 'winter, I shall be saving money while I write.' So therefore it was finally determined.

New book to be written in Switzerland.

There is not much that calls for mention before he left. The first conceiving of a new book was always a restless time, and other subjects beside the characters that were growing in his mind would persistently intrude themselves into his night-wanderings. With some surprise I heard from him afterwards, for example, of a communication opened with a leading member of the Government to ascertain what chances there might be for his appointment, upon due qualification, to the paid magistracy of London: the reply not giving him encouragement to entertain the notion farther. It was of course but an outbreak of momentary discontent; and if the answer had been as hopeful, as, for others' sake rather than his own, one could have wished it to be, the result would have been the same. Just upon the eve of his departure, I may add, he took much interest in the estab-

Thoughts of a magistracy.

lishment of the General Theatrical Fund, of which he remained a trustee until his death. It had originated in the fact that the Funds of the two large theatres, themselves then disused for theatrical performances, were no longer available for the ordinary members of the profession; and on the occasion of his presiding at its first dinner in April he said, very happily, that now the statue of Shakespeare outside the door of Drury-lane, as emphatically as his bust inside the church of Stratford-on-Avon, *pointed out his grave.* I am tempted also to mention as felicitous a word which I heard fall from him at one of the many private dinners that were got up in those days of parting to give him friendliest farewell. 'Nothing is ever so good as it is thought,' said Lord Melbourne. 'And nothing so bad,' interposed Dickens.

LONDON: 1845.

General Theatrical Fund.

A happy saying.

A wise one.

The last incidents were that he again obtained Roche for his travelling servant, and that he let his Devonshire-terrace house to Sir James Duke for twelve months, the entire proposed term of his absence. On the 30th of May they all dined with me, and on the following day left England.

II.

RETREAT TO SWITZERLAND.

1846.

HALTING only at Ostend, Verviers, Coblentz, and Mannheim, they reached Strasburg on the seventh of June: the beauty of the weather* showing them the Rhine at its best. At Mayence there had come aboard their boat a German, who soon after accosted Mrs. Dickens on deck in excellent English: 'Your countryman 'Mr. Dickens is travelling this way just now, our papers say. Do 'you know him, or have you passed him anywhere?' Explanations ensuing, it turned out, by one of the odd chances my

ON THE RHINE: 1846.

German fellow-traveller.

* 'We have hardly seen a cloud in 'the sky since you and I parted at 'Ramsgate, and the heat has been 'extraordinary.'

On the Rhine: 1846.

friend thought himself always singled out for, that he had with him a letter of introduction to the brother of this gentleman; who then spoke to him of the popularity of his books in Germany, and of the many persons he had seen reading them in the steamboats as he came along. Dickens remarking at this how great his own vexation was not to be able himself to speak a word of German, 'Oh dear! that needn't trouble you,' rejoined the other; 'for even 'in so small a town as ours, where we are mostly primitive people 'and have few travellers, I could make a party of at least forty 'people who understand and speak English as well as I do, and 'of at least as many more who could manage to read you in the 'original.' His town was Worms, which Dickens afterwards saw, '. . . a fine old place, though greatly shrunken and decayed in 'respect of its population; with a picturesque old cathedral 'standing on the brink of the Rhine, and some brave old churches 'shut up, and so hemmed in and overgrown with vineyards that 'they look as if they were turning into leaves and grapes.'

City of Worms.

He had no other adventure on the Rhine. But, on the same steamer, a not unfamiliar bit of character greeted him in the well-known lineaments, moral and physical, of two travelling Englishmen who had got an immense barouche on board with them, and had no plan whatever of going anywhere in it. One of them wanted to have this barouche wheeled ashore at every little town and village they came to. The other was bent upon 'seeing it 'out,' as he said—meaning, Dickens supposed, the river; though neither of them seemed to have the slightest interest in it. 'The 'locomotive one would have gone ashore without the carriage, 'and would have been delighted to get rid of it; but they had a 'joint courier, and neither of them would part with *him* for a 'moment; so they went growling and grumbling on together, and 'seemed to have no satisfaction but in asking for impossible 'viands on board the boat, and having a grim delight in the 'steward's excuses.'

Travelling Englishmen.

From Strasburg they went by rail on the 8th to Bâle, from which they started for Lausanne next day, in three coaches, two horses to each, taking three days for the journey: its only enlivening incident being an uproar between the landlord of an

inn on the road, and one of the voituriers who had libelled Boniface's establishment by complaining of the food. 'After 'various defiances on both sides, the landlord said "Scélérat! '"Mécréant! Je vous boaxerai!" to which the voiturier replied, '"Aha! Comment dites-vous? Voulez-vous boaxer? Eh? '"Voulez-vous? Ah! Boaxez-moi donc! Boaxez-moi!"—at 'the same time accompanying these retorts with gestures of 'violent significance, which explained that this new verb-active 'was founded on the well-known English verb to boax, or box. 'If they used it once, they used it at least a hundred times, and 'goaded each other to madness with it always.' The travellers reached the hotel Gibbon at Lausanne on the evening of Thursday the 11th of June; having been tempted as they came along to rest somewhat short of it, by a delightful glimpse of Neuchâtel. 'On consideration however I thought it best to come on here, in 'case I should find, when I begin to write, that I want streets 'sometimes. In which case, Geneva (which I hope would answer 'the purpose) is only four and twenty miles away.'

LAUSANNE: 1846.

Boaxing match.

He at once began house-hunting, and had two days' hard work of it. He found the greater part of those let to the English like small villas in the Regent's-park, with verandahs, glass-doors opening on lawns, and alcoves over-looking lake and mountains. One he was tempted by, higher up the hill, 'poised above the 'town like a ship on a high wave;' but the possible fury of its winter winds deterred him. Greater still was the temptation to him of 'L'Elysée,' more a mansion than a villa; with splendid grounds overlooking the lake, and in its corridors and staircases as well as furniture like an old fashioned country house in England; which he could have got for twelve months for £160. 'But when I came to consider its vastness, I was rather dismayed 'at the prospect of windy nights in the autumn, with nobody 'staying in the house to make it gay.' And so he again fell back upon the very first place he had seen, Rosemont, quite a doll's house; with two pretty little salons, a dining-room, hall, and kitchen, on the ground floor; and with just enough bedrooms upstairs to leave the family one to spare. 'It is beautifully 'situated on the hill that rises from the lake, within ten minutes'

House-hunting.

A cottage chosen.

Lausanne: 1846.

'walk of this hotel, and furnished, though scantily as all here are, 'better than others except Elysée, on account of its having been 'built and fitted up (the little salons in the Parisian way) by the 'landlady and her husband for themselves. They live now in a 'smaller house like a porter's lodge, just within the gate. A 'portion of the grounds is farmed by a farmer, and *he* lives 'close by; so that, while it is secluded, it is not at all lonely.' The rent was to be ten pounds a month for half a year, with reduction to eight for the second half, if he should stay so long; and the rooms and furniture were to be described to me, so that according to custom I should be quite at home there, as soon as, also according to a custom well-known, his own ingenious re-arrangements and improvements in the chairs and tables should be completed. 'I shall merely observe at present therefore, that 'my little study is upstairs, and looks out, from two French 'windows opening into a balcony, on the lake and mountains; 'and that there are roses enough to smother the whole establish-'ment of the *Daily News* in. Likewise, there is a pavilion in the 'garden, which has but two rooms in it; in one of which, I 'think you shall do your work when you come. As to bowers 'for reading and smoking, there are as many scattered about the 'grounds, as there are in Chalk-farm tea-gardens. But the Rose-'mont bowers are really beautiful. Will you come to the 'bowers . . .?'

Its advantages.

Over lake and mountains.

Very pleasant were the earliest impressions of Switzerland with which this first letter closed. 'The country is delightful in the 'extreme—as leafy, green, and shady, as England; full of deep 'glens, and branchy places (rather a Leigh Huntish expression), 'and bright with all sorts of flowers in profusion.* It abounds in 'singing birds besides—very pleasant after Italy; and the moon-'light on the lake is noble. Prodigious mountains rise up from 'its opposite shore (it is eight or nine miles across, at this point), 'and the Simplon, the St. Gothard, Mont Blanc and all the 'Alpine wonders are piled there, in tremendous grandeur. The

Green lanes and Alpine wonders.

* 'The green woods and green 'shades about here,' he says in another letter, 'are more like Cobham in 'Kent, than anything we dream of at 'the foot of the Alpine passes.'

'cultivation is uncommonly rich and profuse. There are all LAUSANNE: 1846.
'manner of walks, vineyards, green lanes, corn-fields, and pastures
'full of hay. The general neatness is as remarkable as in
'England. There are no priests or monks in the streets, and the
'people appear to be industrious and thriving. French (and
'very intelligible and pleasant French) seems to be the universal
'language. I never saw so many booksellers' shops crammed Booksellers' shops.
'within the same space, as in the steep up-and-down streets of
'Lausanne.'

Of the little town he spoke in his next letter as having its natural dulness increased by that fact of its streets going up and down hill abruptly and steeply, like the streets in a dream; and the consequent difficulty of getting about it. 'There are some Town described.
'suppressed churches in it, now used as packers' warehouses:
'with cranes and pulleys growing out of steeple-towers; little
'doors for lowering goods through, fitted into blocked-up oriel
'windows; and cart-horses stabled in crypts. These also help
'to give it a deserted and disused appearance. On the other
'hand, as it is a perfectly free place subject to no prohibitions or A free place.
'restrictions of any kind, there are all sorts of new French books
'and publications in it, and all sorts of fresh intelligence from the
'world beyond the Jura mountains. It contains only one Roman
'Catholic church, which is mainly for the use of the Savoyards
'and Piedmontese who come trading over the Alps. As for the
'country, it cannot be praised too highly, or reported too beau-
'tiful. There are no great waterfalls, or walks through mountain-
'gorges, *close* at hand, as in some other parts of Switzerland; but
'there is a charming variety of enchanting scenery. There is the
'shore of the lake, where you may dip your feet, as you walk, in
'the deep blue water, if you choose. There are the hills to climb
'up, leading to the great heights above the town; or to stagger
'down, leading to the lake. There is every possible variety of
'deep green lanes, vineyard, cornfield, pasture-land, and wood.
'There are excellent country roads that might be in Kent or
'Devonshire: and, closing up every view and vista, is an eternally
'changing range of prodigious mountains—sometimes red, some-
'times grey, sometimes purple, sometimes black, sometimes white

Lausanne: 1846.

'with snow; sometimes close at hand; and sometimes very 'ghosts in the clouds and mist.'

Relish for enjoyment of nature.

In the heart of these things he was now to live and work for at least six months; and, as the love of nature was as much a passion with him in his intervals of leisure, as the craving for crowds and streets when he was busy with the creatures of his fancy, no man was better qualified to enjoy what was thus open to him from his little farm.

The view from each side of it was different in character, and from one there was visible the liveliest aspect of Lausanne itself,

Rosemont.

close at hand, and seeming, as he said, to be always coming down the hill with its steeples and towers, not able to stop itself. 'From a fine long broad balcony on which the windows of my 'little study on the first floor (where I am now writing) open, the 'lake is seen to wonderful advantage,—losing itself by degrees in 'the solemn gorge of mountains leading to the Simplon pass.

Villa described.

'Under the balcony is a stone colonnade, on which the six 'French windows of the drawing-room open; and quantities of 'plants are clustered about the pillars and seats, very prettily. 'One of these drawing-rooms is furnished (like a French hotel)

'with red velvet, and the other with green; in both, plenty of 'mirrors and nice white muslin curtains; and for the larger one 'in cold weather there is a carpet, the floors being bare now, but 'inlaid in squares with different-coloured woods.' His description did not close until, in every nook and corner inhabited by the several members of the family, I was made to feel myself at home; but only the final sentence need be added. 'Walking out into 'the balcony as I write, I am suddenly reminded, by the sight 'of the Castle of Chillon glittering in the sunlight on the lake, 'that I omitted to mention that object in my catalogue of the 'Rosemont beauties. Please to put it, like George Robins, in a 'line by itself.' * LAUSANNE: 1846.

Regular evening walks of nine or ten miles were named in the same letter (22nd of June) as having been begun; and thoughts of his books were already stirring in him. 'An odd shadowy 'undefined idea is at work within me, that I could connect a 'great battle-field somehow with my little Christmas story. 'Shapeless visions of the repose and peace pervading it in after-'time; with the corn and grass growing over the slain, and 'people singing at the plough; are so perpetually floating before 'me, that I cannot but think there may turn out to be something 'good in them when I see them more plainly . . . . I want to 'get Four Numbers of the monthly book done here, and the 'Christmas book. If all goes well, and nothing changes, and I 'can accomplish this by the end of November, I shall run over 'to you in England for a few days with a light heart, and leave 'Roche to move the caravan to Paris in the meanwhile. It will 'be just the very point in the story when the life and crowd of 'that extraordinary place will come vividly to my assistance in 'writing.' Such was his design; and, though difficulties not now seen started up which he had a hard fight to get through, he managed to accomplish it. His letter ended with a promise to

Thoughts of books.

Design as to work.

* A correspondent familiar with Lausanne informs me that the Castle of Chillon is not visible from Rosemont, and that Dickens in these first days must have mistaken some other object for it. 'A long mass of mountain hides Chillon from view, and it 'only becomes perceivable when you 'get six miles from Lausanne on the 'Vevay road, where a curve in the 'road or lake shows it visible behind 'the bank of mountains.'

Lausanne: 1846.

tell me, when next he wrote, of the small colony of English who seemed ready to give him even more than the usual welcome. Two visits had thus early been paid him by Mr. Haldimand, formerly a member of the English parliament, an accomplished man, who, with his sister Mrs. Marcet (the well-known authoress), had long made Lausanne his home. He had a very fine seat just below Rosemont, and his character and station had made him quite the little sovereign of the place. 'He has founded and 'endowed all sorts of hospitals and institutions here, and he 'gives a dinner to-morrow to introduce our neighbours, whoever 'they are.'

Mr. Haldimand and Mrs. Marcet.

Other English neighbours.

He found them to be happily the kind of people who rendered entirely pleasant those frank and cordial hospitalities which the charm of his personal intercourse made every one so eager to offer him. The dinner at Mr. Haldimand's was followed by dinners from the guests he met there; from an English lady* married to a Swiss, Mr. and Mrs. Cerjat, clever and agreeable both, far beyond the common; from her sister wedded to an Englishman, Mr. and Mrs. Goff; and from Mr. and Mrs. Watson of Rockingham-castle in Northamptonshire, who had taken the Elysée [illegible]on Dickens giving it up, and with whom, as with Mr. Haldimand, his relations continued to be very intimate long after he left Lausanne. In his drive to Mr. Cerjat's dinner a whimsical difficulty presented itself. He had set up, for use of his wife and children, an odd little one-horse-carriage; made to hold three persons sideways, so that they should avoid the wind always blowing up or down the valley; and he found it attended with one of the drollest consequences conceivable. 'It can't be 'easily turned; and as you face to the side, all sorts of evolutions 'are necessary to bring you "broad-side to" before the door of 'the house where you are going. The country houses here are

* 'One of her brothers by the bye, 'now dead, had large property in Ire- 'land; all Nenagh, and the country 'about; and Cerjat told me, as we 'were talking about one thing and 'another, that when he went over 'there for some months to arrange the 'widow's affairs, he procured a [illegible] 'of the curse which had been re[illegible] 'the altar by the parish prie[illegible] 'Nenagh, against any of the [illegible] 'who didn't subscribe to the O[illegible] 'nell tribute.'

'very like those upon the Thames between Richmond and 'Kingston (this, particularly), with grounds all round. At 'Mr. Cerjat's we were obliged to be carried, like the child's 'riddle, round the house and round the house, without touching 'the house; and we were presented in the most alarming manner 'three of a row, first to all the people in the kitchen, then to the 'governess who was dressing in her bedroom, then to the drawing-'room where the company were waiting for us, then to the dining-'room where they were spreading the table, and finally to the 'hall where we were got out—scraping the windows of each 'apartment as we glared slowly into it.' LAUSANNE: 1846. On the way to dinner.

A dinner party of his own followed of course; and a sad occurrence, of which he and his guests were unconscious, signalised the evening (15th of July). 'While we were sitting at dinner, 'one of the prettiest girls in Lausanne was drowned in the lake— 'in the most peaceful water, reflecting the steep mountains, and 'crimson with the setting sun. She was bathing in one of the 'nooks set apart for women, and seems somehow to have 'entangled her feet in the skirts of her dress. She was an 'accomplished swimmer, as many of the girls are here, and 'drifted, suddenly, out of only five feet water. Three or four 'friends who were with her, *ran away*, screaming. Our children's 'governess was on the lake in a boat with M. Verdeil (my prison-'doctor) and his family. They ran inshore immediately; the 'body was quickly got out; and M. Verdeil, with three or four 'other doctors, laboured for some hours to restore animation; 'but she only sighed once. After all that time, she was obliged 'to be borne, stiff and stark, to her father's house. She was his 'only child, and but 17 years old. He has been nearly dead 'since, and all Lausanne has been full of the story. I was down 'by the lake, near the place, last night; and a boatman *acted* to 'me the whole scene: depositing himself finally on a heap of 'stones, to represent the body.' Drowned in the lake. Boatman's narrative.

With M. Verdeil, physician to the prison and vice-president of the council of health, introduced by Mr. Haldimand, there had already been much communication; and I could give nothing more characteristic of Dickens than his reference to this, and

LAUSANNE: 1846.

other similar matters in which his interest was strongly moved during his first weeks at Lausanne.

Prison systems.

'Some years ago, when they set about reforming the prison at 'Lausanne, they turned their attention, in a correspondence of 'republican feeling, to America; and taking the Philadelphian 'system for granted, adopted it. Terrible fits, new phases of 'mental affection, and horrible madness, among the prisoners, 'were very soon the result; and attained to such an alarming 'height, that M. Verdeil, in his public capacity, began to report 'against the system, and went on reporting and working against 'it until he formed a party who were determined not to have it, 'and caused it to be abolished—except in cases where the 'imprisonment does not exceed ten months in the whole. It is 'remarkable that in his notes of the different cases, there is *every* '*effect* I mentioned as having observed myself at Philadelphia; 'even down to those contained in the description of the man who 'had been there thirteen years, and who *picked his hands* so much 'as he talked. He has only recently, he says, read the *American* '*Notes;* but he is so much struck by the perfect coincidence that 'he intends to republish some extracts from his own notes, side 'by side with these passages of mine translated into French. I 'went with him over the prison the other day. It is wonderfully 'well arranged for a continental jail, and in perfect order. The 'sentences however, or some of them, are very terrible. I saw

Terrible sentence.

'one man sent there for murder under circumstances of mitigation '—for 30 years. Upon the silent social system all the time! 'They weave, and plait straw, and make shoes, small articles of 'turnery and carpentry, and little common wooden clocks. But 'the sentences are too long for that monotonous and hopeless 'life; and, though they are well-fed and cared for, they generally 'break down utterly after two or three years. One delusion seems 'to become common to three-fourths of them after a certain time 'of imprisonment. Under the impression that there is something 'destructive put into their food "pour les guérir de crime" (says 'M. Verdeil), they refuse to eat!'

Blind Institution.

It was at the Blind Institution, however, of which Mr. Haldimand was the president and great benefactor, that Dickens's

attention was most deeply arrested; and there were two cases in especial of which the detail may be read with as much interest now as when my friend's letters were written, and as to which his own suggestions open up still rather startling trains of thought. The first, which in its attraction for him he found equal even to Laura Bridgman's, was that of a young man of 18: 'born deaf 'and dumb, and stricken blind by an accident when he was about 'five years old. The Director of the institution, M. Hertzel, is a 'young German of great ability, and most uncommonly pre-'possessing appearance. He propounded to the scientific bodies 'of Geneva, a year ago (when this young man was under 'education in the asylum), the possibility of teaching him to speak '—in other words, to play with his tongue upon his teeth and 'palate as if on an instrument, and connect particular per-'formances with particular words conveyed to him in the finger-'language. They unanimously agreed that it was quite impos-'sible. The German set to work, and the young man now speaks 'very plainly and distinctly: without the least modulation, of 'course, but with comparatively little hesitation; expressing the 'words aloud as they are struck, so to speak, upon his hands; 'and showing the most intense and wonderful delight in doing it. 'This is commonly acquired, as you know, by the deaf and 'dumb who learn by sight; but it has never before been achieved 'in the case of a deaf, dumb, and blind subject. He is an 'extremely lively, intelligent, good-humoured fellow; an excellent 'carpenter; a first-rate turner; and runs about the building with 'a certainty and confidence which none of the merely blind pupils 'acquire. He has a great many ideas, and an instinctive dread 'of death. He knows of God, as of Thought enthroned some-'where; and once told, on nature's prompting (the devil's of 'course), a lie. He was sitting at dinner, and the Director asked 'him whether he had had anything to drink; to which he 'instantly replied "No," in order that he might get some more, 'though he had been served in his turn. It was explained to 'him that this was a wrong thing, and wouldn't do, and that he 'was to be locked up in a room for it: which was done. Soon 'after this, he had a dream of being bitten in the shoulder by

LAUSANNE: 1846.

Deaf, dumb, and blind patient.

Punishment for falsehood.

LAUSANNE: 1846.

'some strange animal. As it left a great impression on his mind, 'he told M. the Director that he had told another lie in the night. 'In proof of it he related his dream, and added, "It must be a '"lie you know, because there is no strange animal here, and I '"never was bitten." Being informed that this sort of lie was a 'harmless one, and was called a dream, he asked whether dead 'people ever dreamed* while they were lying in the ground. 'He is one of the most curious and interesting studies possible.'

Falsehood without punishment.

The second case had come in on the very day that Dickens visited the place. 'When I was there' (8th of July) 'there had 'come in, that morning, a girl of ten years old, born deaf and 'dumb and blind, and so perfectly untaught that she has not 'learnt to have the least control even over the performance of the 'common natural functions . . And yet she *laughs sometimes* '(good God! conceive what at!)—and is dreadfully sensitive from 'head to foot, and very much alarmed, for some hours before the 'coming on of a thunder storm. Mr. Haldimand has been long 'trying to induce her parents to send her to the asylum. At last 'they have consented; and when I saw her, some of the little 'blind girls were trying to make friends with her, and to lead her 'gently about. She was dressed in just a loose robe from the 'necessity of changing her frequently, but had been in a bath, 'and had had her nails cut (which were previously very long and 'dirty), and was not at all ill-looking—quite the reverse; with a 'remarkably good and pretty little mouth, but a low and un-'developed head of course. It was pointed out to me, as very 'singular, that the moment she is left alone, or freed from any-'body's touch (which is the same thing to her), she instantly 'crouches down with her hands up to her ears, in exactly the 'position of a child before its birth; and so remains. I thought 'this such a strange coincidence with the utter want of advance-'ment in her moral being, that it made a great impression on me; 'and conning it over and over, I began to think that this is 'surely the invariable action of savages too, and that I have seen

Idiot girl.

* '. . . Ay, there's the rub;
'For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
'When we have shuffled off this mortal coil. . .'

'it over and over again described in books of voyages and 'travels. Not having any of these with me, I turned to *Robinson* '*Crusoe;* and I find De Foe says, describing the savages who 'came on the island after Will Atkins began to change for the 'better and commanded under the grave Spaniard for the common 'defence, "their posture was generally sitting upon the ground, '"with their knees up towards their mouth, and the head put '"between the two hands, leaning down upon the knees"—exactly 'the same attitude!' In his next week's letter he reported further: 'I have not been to the Blind asylum again yet, but they 'tell me that the deaf and dumb and blind child's *face* is im- 'proving obviously, and that she takes great delight in the first 'effort made by the Director to connect himself with an occu- 'pation of her time. He gives her, every day, two smooth round 'pebbles to roll over and over between her two hands. She 'appears to have an idea that it is to lead to something; 'distinctly recognizes the hand that gives them to her, as a 'friendly and protecting one; and sits for hours quite busy.'

LAUSANNE: 1846.

Habits in idiot life and savage.

To one part of his thoughtful suggestion I objected, and would have attributed to a mere desire for warmth, in her as in the savage, what he supposed to be part of an undeveloped or embryo state explaining also the absence of sentient and moral being. To this he replied (25th of July): 'I do not think that 'there is reason for supposing that the savage attitude originates 'in the desire of warmth, because all naked savages inhabit hot 'climates; and their instinctive attitude, if it had reference to 'heat or cold, would probably be the coolest possible; like their 'delight in water, and swimming. I do not think there is any 'race of savage men, however low in grade, inhabiting cold 'climates, who do not kill beasts and wear their skins. The girl 'decidedly improves in face, and, if one can yet use the word as 'applied to her, in manner too. No communication by the 'speech of touch has yet been established with her, but the time 'has not been long enough.' In a later letter he tells me (24th of August): 'The deaf, dumb, and blind girl is decidedly im- 'proved, and very much improved, in this short time. No com- 'munication is yet established with her, but that is not to be

Idiot girl improves.

Lausanne: 1846.

'expected. They have got her out of that strange, crouching 'position; dressed her neatly; and accustomed her to have a 'pleasure in society. She laughs frequently, and also claps her 'hands and jumps; having, God knows how, some inward 'satisfaction. I never saw a more tremendous thing in its way, 'in my life, than when they stood her, t'other day, in the centre 'of a group of blind children who sang a chorus to the piano; 'and brought her hand, and kept it, in contact with the

Effect of music:

'instrument. A shudder pervaded her whole being, her breath 'quickened, her colour deepened,—and I can compare it to 'nothing but returning animation in a person nearly dead. It 'was really awful to see how the sensation of the music fluttered 'and stirred the locked-up soul within her.' The same letter spoke again of the youth: 'The male subject is well and jolly as 'possible. He is very fond of smoking. I have arranged to 'supply him with cigars during our stay here; so he and I are in 'amazing sympathy. I don't know whether he thinks I grow

and of kindness.

'them, or make them, or produce them by winking, or what. 'But it gives him a notion that the world in general belongs to 'me.' . . . Before his kind friend left Lausanne the poor fellow had been taught to say, 'Monsieur Dickens m'a donné les 'cigares,' and at their leavetaking his gratitude was expressed by incessant repetition of these words for a full half-hour.

Certainly by no man was gratitude more persistently earned than by Dickens, from all to whom nature or the world had been churlish or unfair. Not to those only made desolate by poverty or the temptations incident to it, but to those whom natural defects or infirmities had placed at a disadvantage with their

Attending to the neglected.

kind, he gave his first consideration; helping them personally where he could, sympathising and sorrowing with them always, but above all applying himself to the investigation of such alleviation or cure as philosophy or science might be able to apply to their condition. This was a desire so eager as properly to be called one of the passions of his life, visible in him to the last hour of it.

Only a couple of weeks, themselves not idle ones, had passed over him at Rosemont when he made a dash at the beginning of

his work; from which indeed he had only been detained so long by the non-arrival of a box dispatched from London before his own departure, containing not his proper writing materials only, but certain quaint little bronze figures that thus early stood upon his desk, and were as much needed for the easy flow of his writing as blue ink or quill pens. 'I have not been idle' (28th of June) 'since I have been here, though at first I was "kept out" 'of the big box as you know. I had a good deal to write for 'Lord John about the Ragged Schools. I set to work and did 'that. A good deal for Miss Coutts, in reference to her charitable 'projects. I set to work and did *that*. Half of the children's 'New Testament* to write, or pretty nearly. I set to work and 'did *that*. Next I cleared off the greater part of such corres- 'pondence as I had rashly pledged myself to; and then . . . . .

LAUSANNE: 1846. Beginning work.

'BEGAN DOMBEY!

'I performed this feat yesterday—only wrote the first slip—but 'there it is, and it is a plunge straight over head and ears into the 'story. . . Besides all this, I have really gone with great vigour 'at the French, where I find myself greatly assisted by the 'Italian; and am subject to two descriptions of mental fits in 'reference to the Christmas book: one, of the suddenest and 'wildest enthusiasm; one, of solitary and anxious consideration. '. . . By the way, as I was unpacking the big box I took hold of 'a book, and said to "Them,"—"Now, whatever passage my '"thumb rests on, I shall take as having reference to my work." 'It was TRISTRAM SHANDY, and opened at these words, "What '"a work it is likely to turn out! Let us begin it!"'

First slip of new novel.

Sortes Shandyanæ.

The same letter told me that he still inclined strongly to 'the 'field of battle notion' for his Christmas volume, but was not as yet advanced in it; being curious first to see whether its capacity

* This was an abstract, in plain language for the use of his children, of the narrative in the Four Gospels. Allusion was made, shortly after his death, to the existence of such a manuscript, with expression of a wish that it might be published; but nothing would have shocked himself so much as any suggestion of that kind. The little piece was of a peculiarly private character: written for his children, and exclusively and strictly for their use only.

LAUSANNE: 1846.

seemed to strike me at all. My only objection was to his adventure of opening two stories at once, of which he did not yet see the full danger; but for the moment the Christmas fancy was laid aside, and not resumed, except in passing allusions, until after the close of August, when the first two numbers of *Dombey* were done. The interval supplied fresh illustration of his life in his new home, not without much interest; and as I have shown what a pleasant social circle, 'wonderfully friendly and hospitable' to the last, already had grouped itself round him in Lausanne, and how full of matter to be heard and learn'd he found such institutions as its prison and blind school, the picture will receive attractive touches if I borrow from his letters written during this outset of *Dombey* some farther notices as well of the general progress of his work, as of what was specially interesting or amusing to him at the time, and of how the country and the people impressed him. In all of these his character will be found strongly marked.

The Christmas tale.

Weekly letters.

SWISS PEOPLE AND SCENERY.

1846.

Mountains and lake.

WHAT at once had struck him as the wonderful feature in the mountain scenery was its everchanging and yet unchanging aspect. It was never twice like the same thing to him. Shifting and altering, advancing and retreating, fifty times a day, it was unalterable only in its grandeur. The lake itself too had every kind of varying beauty for him. By moonlight it was indescribably solemn; and before the coming on of a storm had a strange property in it of being disturbed, while yet the sky remained clear and the evening bright, which he found to be very mysterious and impressive. Such a storm had come among his earliest and most

grateful experiences; a degree of heat worse even than in Italy * having disabled him at the outset for all exertion until the lightning, thunder, and rain arrived. The letter telling me this (5th July) described the fruit as so abundant in the little farm, that the trees of the orchard in front of his house were bending beneath it; spoke of a field of wheat sloping down to the side window of his dining-room as already cut and carried; and said that the roses, which the hurricane of rain had swept away, were come back lovelier and in greater numbers than ever. LAUSANNE: 1846.

Of the ordinary Swiss people he formed from the first a high opinion which everything during his stay among them confirmed. He thought it the greatest injustice to call them 'the Americans 'of the Continent.' In his first letters he said of the peasantry all about Lausanne that they were as pleasant a people as need be. He never passed, on any of the roads, man, woman, or child, without a salutation; and anything churlish or disagreeable he never noticed in them. 'They have not,' he continued, 'the 'sweetness and grace of the Italians, or the agreeable manners of 'the better specimens of French peasantry, but they are admirably 'educated (the schools of this canton are extraordinarily good, in 'every little village), and always prepared to give a civil and 'pleasant answer. There is no greater mistake. I was talking to 'my landlord † about it the other day, and he said he could not The people. Their manners.

* When it is very hot, it is hotter 'than in Italy. The over-hanging 'roofs of the houses, and the quantity 'of wood employed in their construc- 'tion (where they use tile and brick in 'Italy), render them perfect forcing- 'houses. The walls and floors, hot 'to the hand all the night through, 'interfere with sleep; and thunder is 'almost always booming and rumbling 'among the mountains.' Besides this, though there were no mosquitoes as in Genoa, there was at first a plague of flies, more distressing even than at Albaro. 'They cover everything eat- 'able, fall into everything drinkable, 'stagger into the wet ink of newly- 'written words and make tracks on 'the writing paper, clog their legs in 'the lather on your chin while you 'are shaving in the morning, and 'drive you frantic at any time when 'there is daylight if you fall asleep.'

† His preceding letter had sketched his landlord for me. . . . 'There was 'an annual child's fête at the Signal 'the other night: given by the town. 'It was beautiful to see perhaps a hun- 'dred couple of children dancing in 'an immense ring in a green wood. 'Our three eldest were among them, 'presided over by my landlord, who 'was 18 years in the English navy, 'and is the Sous Préfet of the town— Landlord of Rosemont.

LAUSANNE: 1846.

'conceive how it had ever arisen, but that when he returned from 'his eighteen years' service in the English navy he shunned the 'people, and had no interest in them until they gradually forced 'their real character upon his observation. We have a cook and 'a coachman here, taken at hazard from the people of the town; 'and I never saw more obliging servants, or people who did their 'work so truly *with a will.* And in point of cleanliness, order, 'and punctuality to the moment, they are unrivalled. . . .'

Gathering of peasantry.

The first great gathering of the Swiss peasantry which he saw was in the third week after his arrival, when a country fête was held at a place called The Signal; a deep green wood, on the sides and summit of a very high hill overlooking the town and all the country round; and he gave me a pleasant account of it. 'There were various booths for eating and drinking, and the 'selling of trinkets and sweetmeats; and in one place there was 'a great circle cleared, in which the common people waltzed and 'polka'd, without cessation, to the music of a band. There was 'a great roundabout for children (oh my stars what a family were

Family sketch.

'proprietors of it! A sunburnt father and mother, a hump-'backed boy, a great poodle-dog possessed of all sorts of accom-'plishments, and a young murderer of seventeen who turned the 'machinery); and there were some games of chance and skill 'established under trees. It was very pretty. In some of the 'drinking booths there were parties of German peasants, twenty 'together perhaps, singing national drinking-songs, and making a 'most exhilarating and musical chorus by rattling their cups and 'glasses on the table and clinking them against each other, to a 'regular tune. You know it as a stage dodge, but the real thing

Rifle-shooting.

'is splendid. Farther down the hill, other peasants were rifle-'shooting for prizes, at targets set on the other side of a deep 'ravine, from two to three hundred yards off. It was quite 'fearful to see the astonishing accuracy of their aim, and how, 'every time a rifle awakened the ten thousand echoes of the green

'a very good fellow indeed; quite an 'Englishman. Our landlady, nearly 'twice his age, used to keep the Inn '(a famous one) at Zurich; and having 'made £50,000 bestowed it on a 'young husband. She might have 'done worse.'

'glen, some men crouching behind a little wall immediately in 'front of the targets, sprung up with large numbers in their hands 'denoting where the ball had struck the bull's eye—and then in a 'moment disappeared again. Standing in a ring near these 'shooters was another party of Germans singing hunting-songs, in 'parts, most melodiously. And down in the distance was 'Lausanne, with all sorts of haunted-looking old towers rising up 'before the smooth water of the lake, and an evening sky all red, 'and gold, and bright green. When it closed in quite dark, all 'the booths were lighted up; and the twinkling of the lamps 'among the forest of trees was beautiful. . . .' To this pretty picture, a letter of a little later date, describing a marriage on the farm, added farther comical illustration of the rifle-firing propensities of the Swiss, and had otherwise also whimsical touches of character. 'One of the farmer's people—a sister, I think— 'was married from here the other day. It is wonderful to see 'how naturally the smallest girls are interested in marriages. 'Katey and Mamey were as excited as if they were eighteen. The 'fondness of the Swiss for gunpowder on interesting occasions, is 'one of the drollest things. For three days before, the farmer 'himself, in the midst of his various agricultural duties, plunged 'out of a little door near my windows, about once in every hour, 'and fired off a rifle. I thought he was shooting rats who were 'spoiling the vines; but he was merely relieving his mind, it 'seemed, on the subject of the approaching nuptials. All night 'afterwards, he and a small circle of friends kept perpetually 'letting off guns under the casement of the bridal chamber. A 'Bride is always drest here, in black silk; but this bride wore 'merino of that colour, observing to her mother when she bought 'it (the old lady is 82, and works on the farm), "You know, '"mother, I am sure to want mourning for you, soon; and the '"same gown will do."'*

LAUSANNE: 1846.

Summer-evening picture.

Marriage on the farm.

Bride and mother.

* The close of this letter sent family remembrances in characteristic form. 'Kate, Georgy, Mamey, Katey, Char-'ley, Walley, Chickenstalker, and 'Sampson Brass, commend themselves 'unto your Honour's loving remem-'brance.' The last but one, who continued long to bear the name, was Frank; the last, who very soon will be found to have another, was Alfred. See *ante*, 120, &c.

Lausanne: 1846.

Meanwhile, day by day, he was steadily moving on with his first number; feeling sometimes the want of streets in an 'extra-'ordinary nervousness it would be hardly possible to describe,' that would come upon him after he had been writing all day; but at all other times finding the repose of the place very favourable to industry. 'I am writing slowly at first, of course' (5th of July), 'but I hope I shall have finished the first number in the 'course of a fortnight at farthest. I have done the first chapter, 'and begun another. I say nothing of the merits thus far, or of 'the idea beyond what is known to you; because I prefer that 'you should come as fresh as may be upon them. I shall cer-'tainly have a great surprise for people at the end of the fourth 'number;* and I think there is a new and peculiar sort of 'interest, involving the necessity of a little bit of delicate treat-'ment whereof I will expound my idea to you by and by. When 'I have done this number, I may take a run to Chamounix 'perhaps . . . My thoughts have necessarily been called away from 'the Christmas book. The first *Dombey* done, I think I should 'fly off to that, whenever the idea presented itself vividly before 'me. I still cherish the Battle fancy, though it is nothing but a 'fancy as yet.' A week later he told me that he hoped to finish the first number by that day week or thereabouts, when he should then run and look for his Christmas book in the glaciers at Chamounix. His progress to this point had been pleasing him. 'I think *Dombey* very strong—with great capacity in its leading 'idea; plenty of character that is likely to tell; and some rollick-'ing facetiousness, to say nothing of pathos. I hope you will 'soon judge of it for yourself, however; and I know you will say 'what you think. I have been very constantly at work.' Six days later I heard that he had still eight slips to write, and for a week had put off Chamounix.

First chapter of *Dombey*.

Successful progress.

But though the fourth chapter yet was incomplete, he could repress no longer the desire to write to me of what he was doing (18th of July). 'I think the general idea of *Dombey* is interesting 'and new, and has great material in it. But I don't like to dis-'cuss it with you till you have read number one, for fear I should

* The life of Paul was nevertheless prolonged to the fifth number.

'spoil its effect. When done—about Wednesday or Thursday, LAUSANNE: 1846.
'please God—I will send it in two days' posts, seven letters each
'day. If you have it set at once (I am afraid you couldn't read
'it, otherwise than in print) I know you will impress on B. & E.
'the necessity of the closest secrecy. The very name getting out,
'would be ruinous. The points for illustration, and the enormous Points for illustration.
'care required, make me excessively anxious. The man for
'Dombey, if Browne could see him, the class man to a T, is
'Sir A— E—, of D—'s. Great pains will be necessary with Miss
'Tox. The Toodle Family should not be too much caricatured,
'because of Polly. I should like Browne to think of Susan
'Nipper, who will not be wanted in the first number. After the
'second number, they will all be nine or ten years older; but this
'will not involve much change in the characters, except in the
'children and Miss Nipper. What a brilliant thing to be telling
'you all these names so familiarly, when you know nothing about
''em! I quite enjoy it. By the bye, I hope you may like the
'introduction of Solomon Gills.* I think he lives in a good sort
'of house .... One word more. What do you think, as a name
'for the Christmas book, of THE BATTLE OF LIFE? It is not a A title for Christmas book.
'name I have conned at all, but has just occurred to me in con-
'nection with that foggy idea. If I can see my way, I think I
'will take it next, and clear it off. If you knew how it hangs
'about me, I am sure you would say so too. It would be an
'immense relief to have it done, and nothing standing in the way
'of *Dombey*.'

Within the time left for it the opening number was done, but two little incidents preceded still the trip to Chamounix. The first was a visit from Hallam to Mr. Haldimand. 'Heavens! Henry Hallam.
'how Hallam did talk yesterday! I don't think I ever saw him
'so tremendous. Very good-natured and pleasant, in his way,
'but Good Heavens! how he did talk. That famous day you
'and I remember was nothing to it. His son was with him, and
'his daughter (who has an impediment in her speech, as if
'nature were determined to balance that faculty in the family,

* The mathematical-instrument-maker, whom Mr. Taine describes as a marine store dealer.

Lausanne: 1846.

'and his niece, a pretty woman, the wife of a clergyman and a 'friend of Thackeray's. It strikes me that she must be "the '"little woman" he proposed to take us to drink tea with, once, 'in Golden-square. Don't you remember? His great favourite? 'She is quite a charming person anyhow.' I hope to be pardoned for preserving an opinion which more familiar later acquaintance confirmed, and which can hardly now give anything but pleasure to the lady of whom it is expressed. To the second incident he

Friendly residents.

alludes more briefly. 'As Haldimand and Mrs. Marcet and the 'Cerjats had devised a small mountain expedition for us for to-'morrow, I didn't like to allow Chamounix to stand in the way. So 'we go with them first, and start on our own account on Tuesday. 'We are extremely pleasant with these people.' The close of the same letter (25th of July), mentioning two pieces of local news, gives intimation of the dangers incident to all Swiss travelling, and of such special precautions as were necessary for the holiday

Local news.

among the mountains he was now about to take. 'My first news 'is that a crocodile is said to have escaped from the Zoological 'gardens at Geneva, and to be now "zigzag-zigging" about the 'lake. But I can't make out whether this is a great fact, or 'whether it is a pious fraud to prevent too much bathing and 'liability to accidents. The other piece of news is more serious. 'An English family whose name I don't know, consisting of a father, mother, and daughter, arrived at the hotel Gibbon here 'last Monday, and started off on some mountain expedition in 'one of the carriages of the country. It was a mere track, the 'road, and ought to have been travelled only by mules, but the 'Englishman persisted (as Englishmen do) in going on in the

Sight-seers from England.

'carriage; and in answer to all the representations of the driver 'that no carriage had ever gone up there, said he needn't be 'afraid he wasn't going to be paid for it, and so forth. Accord-'ingly, the coachman got down and walked by the horses' heads. 'It was fiery hot; and, after much tugging and rearing, the horses 'began to back, and went down bodily, carriage and all, into a 'deep ravine. The mother was killed on the spot; and the 'father and daughter are lying at some house hard by, not 'expected to recover.'

His next letter (written on the second of August) described his own first real experience of mountain-travel. 'I begin my letter 'to-night, but only begin, for we returned from Chamounix in 'time for dinner just now, and are pretty considerably done up. 'We went by a mountain pass not often crossed by ladies, called 'the Col de Balme, where your imagination may picture Kate 'and Georgy on mules *for ten hours at a stretch* riding up and 'down the most frightful precipices. We returned by the pass of 'the Tête Noire, which Talfourd knows, and which is of a dif-'ferent character, but astonishingly fine too. Mont Blanc, and 'the Valley of Chamounix, and the Mer de Glace, and all the 'wonders of that most wonderful place, are above and beyond 'one's wildest expectations. I cannot imagine anything in nature 'more stupendous or sublime. If I were to write about it now, I 'should quite rave—such prodigious impressions are rampant 'within me. . . . You may suppose that the mule-travelling is 'pretty primitive. Each person takes a carpet-bag strapped on 'the mule behind himself or herself: and that is all the baggage 'that can be carried. A guide, a thorough-bred mountaineer, 'walks all the way, leading the lady's mule; I say the lady's par 'excellence, in compliment to Kate; and all the rest struggle on 'as they please. The cavalcade stops at a lone hut for an hour 'and a half in the middle of the day, and lunches brilliantly on 'whatever it can get. Going by that Col de Balme pass, you 'climb up and up and up for five hours and more, and look— 'from a mere unguarded ledge of path on the side of the precipice '—into such awful valleys, that at last you are firm in the belief 'that you have got above everything in the world, and that there 'can be nothing earthly overhead. Just as you arrive at this con-'clusion, a different (and oh Heaven! what a free and wonderful) 'air comes blowing on your face; you cross a ridge of snow; and 'lying before you (wholly unseen till then), towering up into the 'distant sky, is the vast range of Mont Blanc, with attendant 'mountains diminished by its majestic side into mere dwarfs 'tapering up into innumerable rude Gothic pinnacles; deserts of 'ice and snow; forests of firs on mountain sides, of no account at 'all in the enormous scene; villages down in the hollow, that you

LAUSANNE: 1846. — Trip to Chamounix. — Mule-travelling. — Col de Balme. — Mont Blanc range.

Lausanne: 1846.

'can shut out with a finger; waterfalls, avalanches, pyramids and 'towers of ice, torrents, bridges; mountain upon mountain until 'the very sky is blocked away, and you must look up, overhead, 'to see it. Good God, what a country Switzerland is, and what a 'concentration of it is to be beheld from that one spot! And '(think of this in Whitefriars and in Lincoln's-inn!) at noon on 'the second day from here, the first day being but half a one by 'the bye and full of uncommon beauty, you lie down on that ridge 'and see it all! . . . I think I must go back again (whether you 'come or not!) and see it again before the bad weather arrives. 'We have had sunlight, moonlight, a perfectly transparent atmos-'phere with not a cloud, and the grand plateau on the very 'summit of Mont Blanc so clear by day and night that it was 'difficult to believe in intervening chasms and precipices, and 'almost impossible to resist the idea that one might sally forth 'and climb up easily. I went into all sorts of places; armed 'with a great pole with a spike at the end of it, like a leaping-pole, 'and with pointed irons buckled on to my shoes; and am all but 'knocked up. I was very anxious to make the expedition to what 'is called "The Garden:" a green spot covered with wild flowers, 'lying across the Mer de Glace, and among the most awful moun-'tains: but I could find no Englishman at the hotels who was 'similarly disposed, and the Brave *wouldn't go.* No sir! He 'gave in point blank (having been horribly blown in a climbing 'excursion the day before), and couldn't stand it. He is too 'heavy for such work, unquestionably.* In all other respects, I 'think he has exceeded himself on this journey: and if you could 'have seen him riding a very small mule up a road exactly like 'the broken stairs of Rochester-castle, with a brandy bottle slung 'over his shoulder, a small pie in his hat, a roast fowl looking out 'of his pocket, and a mountain staff of six feet long carried 'crosswise on the saddle before him, you'd have said so. He 'was (next to me) the admiration of Chamounix, but he utterly 'quenched me on the road.'

Effect upon Dickens.

Mer de Glace.

The courier and his master.

On the road as they returned there had been a small adventure,

* Poor fellow! he had latent disease of the heart, which developed itself rapidly on Dickens's return to England.

the day before this letter was written. Dickens was jingling slowly up the Tête Noire pass (his mule having thirty-seven bells on its head), riding at the moment quite alone, when—'an Englishman 'came bolting out of a little châlet in a most inaccessible and 'extraordinary place, and said with great glee "There has been '"an accident here, sir!" I had been thinking of anything else 'you please! and, having no reason to suppose him an English- 'man except his language, which went for nothing in the confusion, 'stammered out a reply in French and stared at him, in a very 'damp shirt and trowsers, as he stared at me in a similar cos- 'tume. On his repeating the announcement, I began to have a 'glimmering of common sense; and so arrived at a knowledge of 'the fact that a German lady had been thrown from her mule and 'had broken her leg, at a short distance off, and had found her 'way in great pain to that cottage, where the Englishman, a 'Prussian, and a Frenchman, had presently come up; and the 'Frenchman, by extraordinary good fortune, was a surgeon! They 'were all from Chamounix, and the three latter were walking in 'company. It was quite charming to see how attentive they 'were. The lady was from Lausanne; where she had come from 'Frankfort to make excursions with her two boys, who are at the 'college here, during the vacation. She had no other attendants, 'and the boys were crying and very frightened. The Englishman 'was in the full glee of having just cut up one white dress, two 'chemises, and three pocket handkerchiefs, for bandages; the 'Frenchman had set the leg, skilfully; the Prussian had scoured 'a neighbouring wood for some men to carry her forward; and 'they were all at it, behind the hut, making a sort of hand-barrow 'on which to bear her. When it was constructed, she was 'strapped upon it; had her poor head covered over with a hand- 'kerchief, and was carried away; and we all went on in company: 'Kate and Georgy consoling and tending the sufferer, who was 'very cheerful, but had lost her husband only a year.' With the same delightful observation, and missing no touch of kindly character that might give each actor his place in the little scene, the sequel is described; but it does not need to add more. It was hoped that by means of relays of men at Martigny the poor

LAUSANNE: 1846.

Tête Noire pass.

Accident.

English, French, and Prussian help.

LAUSANNE: 1846.

Result of adventure.

lady might have been carried on some twenty miles, in the cooler evening, to the head of the lake, and so have been got into the steamer; but she was too exhausted to be borne beyond the inn, and there she had to remain until joined by relatives from Frankfort.

A few days' rest after his return were interposed, before he began his second number; and until the latter has been completed, and the Christmas story taken in hand, I do not admit the reader to his full confidences about his writing. But there were other subjects that amused and engaged him up to that date, as well when he was idle as when again he was at work, to which expression so full of character is given in his letters that they properly find mention here.

Early in August he visited Chillon, when the aspect of the lake, five minutes after sunset, the sky at the time being covered with sullen black clouds reflected in the deep water, much impressed him. The Castle itself he thought the best deserving and least exaggerated in its repute, of all the places he had seen.

Castle of Chillon described.

'The insupportable solitude and dreariness of the white walls and 'towers, the sluggish moat and drawbridge, and the lonely ram-'parts, I never saw the like of. But there is a courtyard inside; 'surrounded by prisons, oubliettes, and old chambers of torture; 'so terrifically sad, that death itself is not more sorrowful. And 'oh! a wicked old Grand Duke's bedchamber upstairs in the 'tower, with a secret staircase down into the chapel where the 'bats were wheeling about; and Bonnivard's dungeon; and a 'horrible trap whence prisoners were cast out into the lake; and a 'stake all burnt and crackled up, that still stands in the torture-'ante-chamber to the saloon of justice (!)—what tremendous 'places! Good God, the greatest mystery in all the earth, to me, 'is how or why the world was tolerated by its Creator through 'the good old times, and wasn't dashed to fragments.'

Fête in honour of New Constitution.

On the ninth of August he wrote to me that there was to be a prodigious fête that day in Lausanne, in honour of the first anniversary of the proclamation of the New Constitution: 'beginning 'at sunrise with the firing of great guns, and twice two thousand 'rounds of rifles by two thousand men; proceeding at eleven

'o'clock with a great service, and some speechifying, in the church; 'and ending to-night with a great ball in the public promenade, 'and a general illumination of the town.' The authorities had 'invited him to a place of honour in the ceremony; and though he did not go ('having been up till three o'clock in the morning, 'and being fast asleep at the appointed time'), the reply that sent his thanks expressed also his sympathy. He was the readier with this from having discovered, in the 'old' or 'gentlemanly' party of the place ('including of course the sprinkling of English who 'are always tory, hang 'em!'), so wonderfully sore a feeling about the revolution thus celebrated, that to avoid its fête the majority had gone off by steamer the day before, and those who remained were prophesying assaults on the unilluminated houses, and other excesses. Dickens had no faith in such predictions. 'The people 'are as perfectly good-tempered and quiet always, as people can 'be. I don't know what the last Government may have been, 'but they seem to me to do very well with this, and to be ration- 'ally and cheaply provided for. If you believe what the dis- 'contented assert, you wouldn't believe in one solitary man or 'woman with a grain of goodness or civility. I find nothing *but* 'civility; and I walk about in all sorts of out-of-the-way places, 'where they live rough lives enough, in solitary cottages.' The issue was told in two postscripts to his letter, and showed him to be so far right. 'P.S. 6 o'clock afternoon. The fête going on, 'in great force. Not one of "the old party" to be seen. I went 'down with one to the ground before dinner, and nothing would 'induce him to go within the barrier with me. Yet what they 'call a revolution was nothing but a change of government. 'Thirty-six thousand people, in this small canton, petitioned 'against the Jesuits—God knows with good reason. The Go- 'vernment chose to call them "a mob." So, to prove that they 'were not, they turned the Government out. I honour them 'for it. They are a genuine people, these Swiss. There is better 'metal in them than in all the stars and stripes of all the fustian 'banners of the so-called, and falsely-called, U-nited States. They 'are a thorn in the sides of European despots, and a good whole- 'some people to live near Jesuit-ridden Kings on the brighter

LAUSANNE: 1846.

Political celebration.

Good conduct of the people.

LAUSANNE: 1846.

'side of the mountains.' 'P.S. August 10th. . . . The fête 'went off as quietly as I supposed it would; and they danced all 'night.'

These views had forcible illustration in a subsequent letter, where he describes a similar revolution that occurred at Geneva before he left the country; and nothing could better show his practical good sense in a matter of this kind. The description will be given shortly; and meanwhile I subjoin a comment made by him, not less worthy of attention, upon my reply to his account of the anti-Jesuit celebration at Lausanne. 'I don't know 'whether I have mentioned before, that in the valley of the 'Simplon hard by here, where (at the bridge of St. Maurice, over 'the Rhone) this Protestant canton ends and a Catholic canton 'begins, you might separate two perfectly distinct and different 'conditions of humanity by drawing a line with your stick in the 'dust on the ground. On the Protestant side, neatness; cheer- 'fulness; industry; education; continual aspiration, at least, after 'better things. On the Catholic side, dirt, disease, ignorance, 'squalor, and misery. I have so constantly observed the like of 'this, since I first came abroad, that I have a sad misgiving that 'the religion of Ireland lies as deep at the root of all its sorrows, 'even as English misgovernment and Tory villany.' Almost the counterpart of this remark is to be found in one of the later writings of Macaulay.

Protestant and Catholic cantons.

IV.

SKETCHES CHIEFLY PERSONAL.

1846.

SOME sketches from the life in his pleasantest vein now claim to be taken from the same series of letters; and I will prefix one or two less important notices, for the most part personal also, that have characteristic mention of his opinions in them.

Home-politics he criticized, in what he wrote on the 24th of August, much in the spirit of his last excellent remark on the Protestant and Catholic cantons; having no sympathy with the course taken by the whigs in regard to Ireland after they had defeated Peel on his coercion bill and resumed the government. 'I am perfectly appalled by the hesitation and cowardice of the 'whigs. To bring in that arms bill, bear the brunt of the attack 'upon it, take out the obnoxious clauses, still retain the bill, and 'finally withdraw it, seems to me the meanest and most halting 'way of going to work that ever was taken. I cannot believe in 'them. Lord John must be helpless among them. They seem 'somehow or other never to know what cards they hold in their 'hands, and to play them out blindfold. The contrast with Peel '(as he was last) is, I agree with you, certainly not favourable. I 'don't believe now they ever would have carried the repeal of the 'corn law, if they could.' Referring in the same letter* to the reluctance of public men of all parties to give the needful help to schemes of emigration, he ascribed it to a secret belief in 'the 'gentle politico-economical principle that a surplus population 'must and ought to starve;' in which, for himself, he never could see anything but disaster for all who trusted to it. 'I am con-'vinced that its philosophers would sink any government, any 'cause, any doctrine, even the most righteous. There is a sense 'and humanity in the mass, in the long run, that will not bear 'them; and they will wreck their friends always, as they wrecked 'them in the working of the Poor-law-bill. Not all the figures 'that Babbage's calculating machine could turn up in twenty 'generations, would stand in the long run against the general 'heart.'

LAUSANNE: 1846.

The whigs and Peel.

* Where he makes remark also on a class of offences which are still most inadequately punished: 'I hope you 'will follow up your idea about the 'defective state of the law in reference 'to women, by some remarks on the 'inadequate punishment of that ruffian 'flippantly called by the liners the 'Wholesale Matrimonial Speculator. 'My opinion is, that in any well-'ordered state of society, and ad-'vanced spirit of social jurisprudence, 'he would have been flogged more 'than once (privately), and certainly 'sentenced to transportation for no 'less a term than the rest of his life. 'Surely the man who threw the woman 'out of window was no worse, if so 'bad.'

Defective legislation.

LAUSANNE: 1846.

Of other topics in his letters, one or two have the additional attractiveness derivable from touches of personal interest when these may with propriety be printed. 'I am very sorry to hear 'of Haydon's death. If any subscription be proposed, put me 'down for five pounds.' An unfortunate son of Leigh Hunt died also just at this time, and I preserve the allusion to him for the opportunity of explaining it. 'I quite shuddered at John Hunt's 'having applied to that generous duke. It went against the grain 'with me, sorely, after the story of the two hundred pounds. I 'don't know what I should have done, if I had been Hunt.' The duke was the late Duke of Devonshire; and the story was this. During the delay of the promised production of Leigh Hunt's first play, he asked the duke for £200 as a loan for two years; and the duke replied by taking the money himself to Hunt's house in Edwardes' Square. On the last day of the second year within which repayment was promised, Hunt sent back the £200; and was startled, the morning after, by another visit from the duke, who pressed upon him its reacceptance as a gift. He added that there would be no obligation, for he was himself Hunt's debtor. He was ill when asked for the loan, and it had done him good to comply with the request. Never but once before had borrowed money ever come back to him, and he should always retain the sense of pleasure which its return had occasioned. 'He remained 'grateful.' It is a charming story, and hard to say who shows in it to the greatest advantage, Hunt or the duke.

B. R. Haydon.

Leigh Hunt and the Duke of Devonshire.

Hood's *Tylney Hall.*

The letter goes on to speak of Hood. 'I have been reading 'poor Hood's *Tylney Hall:* the most extraordinary jumble of 'impossible extravagance, and especial cleverness, I ever saw. 'The man drawn to the life from the pirate-bookseller, is wonder- 'fully good; and his recommendation to a reduced gentleman 'from the university, to rise from nothing as he, the pirate, did, 'and go round to the churches and see whether there's 'an 'opening, and begin by being a beadle, is one of the finest things 'I ever read, in its way.' The same letter has a gentle little trait of the great duke, touching in its simplicity, and worth preserving. 'I had a letter from Tagart the day before yesterday, with a 'curious little anecdote of the Duke of Wellington in it. They

Duke of Wellington.

'have had a small cottage at Walmer; and one day—the other 'day only—the old man met their little daughter Lucy, a child 'about Mamey's age, near the garden; and having kissed her, 'and asked her what was her name, and who and what her parents 'were, tied a small silver medal round her neck with a bit of pink 'ribbon, and asked the child to keep it in remembrance of him. 'There is something good, and aged, and odd in it. Is there 'not?' LAUSANNE: 1846.

Another of his personal references was to Lord Grey, to whose style of speaking and general character of mind he had always a strongly-expressed dislike, drawn not impartially or quite justly from the days of reaction that followed the reform debates, when the whig leader's least attractive traits were presented to the young reporter. 'He is a very intelligent agreeable fellow, the 'said Watson by the bye' (he is speaking of the member of the Lausanne circle with whom he established friendliest after-intercourse); 'he sat for Northamptonshire in the reform bill time, 'and is high sheriff of his county and all the rest of it; but has 'not the least nonsense about him, and is a thorough good liberal. 'He has a charming wife, who draws well, and is making a sketch 'of Rosemont for us that shall be yours in Paris.' (It is already, *ante*, 448, by permission of its present possessor, the reader's, and all the world's who may take interest in the little doll's house of Lausaune which lodged so illustrious a tenant.) 'He was giving 'me some good recollections of Lord Grey the other evening 'when we were playing at battledore (old Lord Grey I mean), 'and of the constitutional impossibility he and Lord Lansdowne 'and the rest laboured under, of ever personally attaching a 'single young man, in all the excitement of that exciting time, to 'the leaders of the party. It was quite a delight to me, as I 'listened, to recall my own dislike of his style of speaking. . . . 'The shape of his head (I see it now) was misery to me, and 'weighed down my youth.' Lord Grey. Mr. Watson of Rockingham. A recollection of reporting days.

It was now the opening of the second week in August; and before he finally addressed himself to the second number of *Dombey*, he had again turned a lingering look in the direction of his Christmas tale. 'It would be such a great relief to me to

LAUSANNE: 1846.

'get that small story out of the way.' Wisely, however, again he refrained, and went on with *Dombey;* at which he had been working for a little time when he described to me (24th of August) a visit from two English travellers, of one of whom with the slightest possible touch he gives a speaking likeness.

'Not having your letter as usual, I sat down to write to you on 'speculation yesterday, but lapsed in my uncertainty into *Dombey*, 'and worked at it all day. It was, as it has been since last 'Tuesday morning, incessantly raining regular mountain rain. After dinner, at a little after seven o'clock, I was walking up and 'down under the little colonnade in the garden, racking my brain

Two English travellers.

'about *Dombeys* and *Battles of Lives*, when two travel-stained-'looking men approached, of whom one, in a very limp and 'melancholy straw hat, ducked perpetually to me as he came up 'the walk. I couldn't make them out at all; and it wasn't till I 'got close up to them that I recognised A. and (in the straw hat) 'N. They had come from Geneva by the steamer, and taken a 'scrambling dinner on board. I gave them some fine Rhine 'wine, and cigars innumerable. A. enjoyed himself and was

A man of genius and his companion.

'quite at home. N. (an odd companion for a man of genius) 'was snobbish, but pleased and good-natured. A. had a five 'pound note in his pocket which he had worn down, by careless 'carrying about, to some two-thirds of its original size, and which 'was so ragged in its remains that when he took it out bits of it 'flew about the table. "Oh Lor you know—now really—like '"Goldsmith you know—or any of those great men!" said N., 'with the very "snatches in his voice and burst of speaking" that 'reminded Leigh Hunt of Cloten. . . The clouds were lying, as 'they do in such weather here, on the earth, and our friends saw 'no more of Lake Leman than of Battersea. Nor had they, it 'might appear, seen more of the Mer de Glace, on their way 'here; their talk about it bearing much resemblance to that of 'the man who had been to Niagara and said it was nothing but 'water.'

Party among the hills.

His next letter described a day's party of the Cerjats, Watsons, and Haldimands, among the neighbouring hills, which, contrary to his custom while at work, he had been unable to resist the

temptation of joining. They went to a mountain-lake twelve miles off, had dinner at the public-house on the lake, and returned home by Vevay at which they rested for tea; and where pleasant talk with Mr. Cerjat led to anecdotes of an excellent friend of ours, formerly resident at Lausanne, with which the letter closed. Our friend was a distinguished writer, and a man of many sterling fine qualities, but with a habit of occasional free indulgence in coarseness of speech, which, though his earlier life had made it as easy to acquire as difficult to drop, did always less than justice to a very manly, honest, and really gentle nature. He had as much genuinely admirable stuff in him as any favourite hero of Smollett or Fielding, and I never knew anyone who reminded me of those characters so much. 'It would seem, Mr. Cerjat tells me, that 'he was, when here, infinitely worse in his general style of 'conversation, than now—sermuchser, as Toodle says, that 'Cerjat describes himself as having always been in unspeakable 'agony when he was at his table, lest he should forget himself '(or remember himself, as I suggested) and break out before the 'ladies. There happened to be living here at that time a stately 'English baronet and his wife, who had two sons concerning 'whom they cherished the idea of accomplishing their education 'into manhood coexistently with such perfect purity and inno-'cence, that they were hardly to know their own sex. Accordingly, 'they were sent to no school or college, but had masters of all 'sorts at home, and thus reached eighteen years or so, in what 'Falstaff calls a kind of male green-sickness. At this crisis of 'their innocent existence, our ogre friend encountered these 'lambs at dinner, with their father, at Cerjat's house; and, as if 'possessed by a devil, launched out into such frightful and appal-'ling impropriety that years of education in Newgate would have 'been as nothing compared with their experience of that one 'afternoon. After turning paler and paler, and more and more 'stoney, the baronet, with a half-suppressed cry, rose and fled. 'But the sons—intent on the ogre—remained instead of following '... Isn't it a good story? I can SEE our friend and his 'pupils now* ... Poor fellow! He seems to have a hard

LAUSANNE: 1846.

A hero for Smollett.

Ogre and lambs.

* One of the victims of the attack here good-naturedly exaggerated,

LAUSANNE: 1846.

'time of it in. his home . . and to have been himself, in all good-'natured easy-going ways, just what we know him now.'

There were at this date some fresh arrivals of travelling English at Lausanne, outside their own little circle, and among them another baronet and his family made amusing appearance. 'We 'have another English family here, one Sir Joseph and his lady, 'and ten children. Sir Joseph, a large baronet something in the 'Graham style, with a little, loquacious, flat-faced, damaged-'featured, *old young* wife. They are fond of society, and couldn't 'well have less. They delight in a view, and live in a close 'street at Ouchy down among the drunken boatmen and the 'drays and omnibuses, where nothing whatever is to be seen but 'the locked wheels of carts scraping down the uneven, steep, 'stone pavement. The baronet plays double-dummy all day long, 'with an unhappy Swiss whom he has entrapped for that purpose; 'the baronet's lady pays visits; and the baronet's daughters play a 'Lausanne piano, which must be heard to be appreciated . . .'

Sir Joseph and his family.

Another sketch in the same letter touches little more than the eccentricities (but all in good taste and good humour) of the subject of it, who is still gratefully remembered by English residents in Italy for his scholarly munificence, and for very valuable service conferred by it on Italian literature. 'Another curious man is 'backwards and forwards here—a Lord Vernon,* who is well-'informed, a great Italian scholar deep in Dante, and a very 'good-humoured gentleman, but who has fallen into the strange 'infatuation of attending every rifle-match that takes place in 'Switzerland, accompanied by two men who load rifles for him, 'one after another, which he has been frequently known to fire off, 'two a minute, for fourteen hours at a stretch, without once 'changing his position or leaving the ground. He wins all kinds

Lord Vernon.

Passion for rifle-shooting.

thus writes to me: 'I well remember 'the dinner at Mr. Cerjat's alluded to. 'It was not, however, our first ac-'quaintance with the "distinguished '"writer," as he came with his family 'to stay at a Pension on the border of 'the Lake of Geneva, where my father 'and his family were then living, and 'notwithstanding the gallant captain' '"habit" the families subsequently 'became very intimate.'

* This was the fifth Baron Vernon, who succeeded to the title in 1835, and died twenty years after the date of Dickens's description, in his 64th year.

'of prizes; gold watches, flags, teaspoons, teaboards, and so forth; and is constantly travelling about with them, from place to place, in an extraordinary carriage, where you touch a spring and a chair flies out, touch another spring and a bed appears, touch another spring and a closet of pickles opens, touch another spring and disclose a pantry! while Lady Vernon (said to be handsome and accomplished) is continually cutting across this or that Alpine pass in the night, to meet him on the road for a minute or two, on one of his excursions; these being the only times at which she can catch him. The last time he saw her, was five or six months ago, when they met and supped together on the St. Gothard! It is a monomania with him, of course. He is a man of some note; seconded one of Lord Melbourne's addresses; and had forty thousand a year, now reduced to ten, but nursing and improving every day. He was with us last Monday, and comes back from some out-of-the-way place to join another small picnic next Friday. As I have said, he is the very soul of good nature and cheerfulness, but one can't help being melancholy to see a man wasting his life in such a singular delusion. Isn't it odd? He knows my books very well, and seems interested in everything concerning them; being indeed accomplished in books generally, and attached to many elegant tastes.'

LAUSANNE: 1846.

A wonderful carriage.

Wasting life.

But the most agreeable addition to their own special circle was referred to in his first September letter, just when he was coming to the close of his second number of *Dombey*. 'There are two nice girls here, the Ladies Taylor, daughters of Lord Headfort. Their mother was daughter (I think) of Sir John Stevenson, and Moore dedicated one part of the Irish Melodies to her. They inherit the musical taste, and sing very well. A proposal is on foot for our all bundling off on Tuesday (16 strong) to the top of the Great St. Bernard. But the weather seems to have broken, and the autumn rains to have set in; which I devoutly hope will break up the party. It would be a most serious hindrance to me, just now; but I have rashly promised. Do you know young Romilly? He is coming over from Geneva when "the "reading" comes off, and is a fine fellow I am told. There is

Proposed trip to Great St. Bernard.

LAUSANNE: 1846. 'not a bad little theatre here; and by way of an artificial crowd, 'I should certainly have got it open with an amateur company, if 'we were not so few that the only thing we want is the audience.'

Reading of first *Dombey*. . . . The 'reading' named by him was that of his first number, which was to 'come off' as soon as I could get the proofs out to him; but which the changes needful to be made, and to be mentioned hereafter, still delayed. The St. Bernard holiday, which within sight of his Christmas-book labour he would fain have thrown over, came off as proposed very fortunately for the reader, who might otherwise have lost one of his pleasantest descriptions. But before giving it, one more little sketch of character may be interposed; as delicately done as anything in his writings. Steele's observation is in the outline, and Charles Lamb's humour in its touch of colouring.

Two sisters: '. . . There are two old ladies (English) living here who may 'serve me for a few lines of gossip—as I have intended they 'should, over and over again, but I have always forgotten it. 'There were originally four old ladies, sisters, but two of them 'have faded away in the course of eighteen years, and withered 'by the side of John Kemble in the cemetery. They are very 'little, and very skinny; and each of them wears a row of false 'curls, like little rolling-pins, so low upon her brow, that there is 'no forehead; nothing above the eyebrows but a deep horizontal

and their library: 'wrinkle, and then the curls. They live upon some small annuity. 'For thirteen years they have wanted very much to move to 'Italy, as the eldest old lady says the climate of this part of 'Switzerland doesn't agree with her, and preys upon her spirits; 'but they have never been able to go, because of the difficulty of 'moving "the books." This tremendous library belonged once 'upon a time to the father of these old ladies, and comprises 'about fifty volumes. I have never been able to see what they 'are, because one of the old ladies always sits before them; but 'they look, outside, like very old backgammon boards. The two 'deceased sisters died in the firm persuasion that this precious

too gigantic to be got over the Simplon. 'property could never be got over the Simplon without some 'gigantic effort to which the united family was unequal. The 'two remaining sisters live, and will die also, in the same belief.

'I met the eldest (evidently drooping) yesterday, and recommended her to try Genoa. She looked shrewdly at the snow that closes up the mountain prospect just now, and said that when the spring was quite set in, and the avalanches were down, and the passes well open, she would certainly try that place, if they could devise any plan, in the course of the winter, for moving "the books." The whole library will be sold by auction here, when they are both dead, for about a napoleon; and some young woman will carry it home in two journeys with a basket.' LAUSANNE 1846.

The last letter sent me before he fell upon his self-appointed task for Christmas, contained a delightful account of the trip to the Great St. Bernard. It was dated on the sixth of September. Trip to Great St. Bernard.

'The weather obstinately clearing, we started off last Tuesday for the Great St. Bernard, returning here on Friday afternoon. The party consisted of eleven people and two servants—Haldimand, Mr. and Mrs. Cerjat and one daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Watson, two Ladies Taylor, Kate, Georgy, and I. We were wonderfully unanimous and cheerful; went away from here by the steamer; found at its destination a whole omnibus provided by the Brave (who went on in advance everywhere); rode therein to Bex; found two large carriages ready to take us to Martigny; slept there; and proceeded up the mountain on mules next day. Although the St. Bernard convent is, as I dare say you know, the highest inhabited spot but one in the world, the ascent is extremely gradual and uncommonly easy: really presenting no difficulties at all until within the last league, when the ascent, lying through a place called the valley of desolation, is very awful and tremendous, and the road is rendered toilsome by scattered rocks and melting snow. The convent is a most extraordinary place, full of great vaulted passages, divided from each other with iron gratings; and presenting a series of the most astonishing little dormitories, where the windows are so small (on account of the cold and snow), that it is as much as one can do to get one's head out of them. Here we slept: supping, thirty strong, in a rambling room with a great wood-fire in it set apart for that purpose; with a grim monk, in a high black sugar-loaf hat with a great knob at the top of it, carving the dishes. Valley of Desolation. The convent.

Lausanne: 1846.

'At five o'clock in the morning the chapel bell rang in the dismallest way for matins: and I, lying in bed close to the chapel, and being awakened by the solemn organ and the chaunting, thought for a moment I had died in the night and passed into the unknown world.

'I wish to God you could see that place. A great hollow on the top of a range of dreadful mountains, fenced in by rocks of every shape and colour; and in the midst, a black lake, with phantom clouds perpetually stalking over it. Peaks, points, and plains of eternal ice and snow, bounding the view, and shutting out the world on every side: the lake reflecting nothing: and no human figure in the scene. The air so thin that it is difficult to breathe without feeling out of breath, the cold so exquisitely thin and sharp that it is not to be described. Nothing of life or living interest in the picture but the grey dull walls of the convent. No vegetation of any kind. Nothing growing, nothing stirring. Everything bound, and frozen up. Beside the convent, in a little outhouse with a grated iron door which you may unbolt for yourself, are the bodies of people found in the snow who have never been claimed and are withering away—not laid down, or stretched out, but standing up, in corners and against walls; some erect and horribly human, with distinct expressions on the faces; some sunk down on their knees; some dropping over on one side; some tumbled down altogether, and presenting a heap of skulls and fibrous dust. There is no other decay in that atmosphere; and there they remain during the short days and the long nights, the only human company out of doors, withering away by grains, and holding ghastly possession of the mountain where they died.

Scene at mountain top.

Bodies found in the snow.

'It is the most distinct and individual place I have seen, even in this transcendent country. But, for the Saint Bernard holy fathers and convent in themselves, I am sorry to say that they are a piece of as sheer humbug as we ever learnt to believe in, in our young days. Trashy French sentiment and the dogs (of which, by the bye, there are only three remaining) have done it all. They are a lazy set of fellows; not over fond of going

Holy fathers.

'out themselves; employing servants to clear the road (which 'has not been important or much used as a pass these hundred 'years); rich; and driving a good trade in Innkeeping: the 'convent being a common tavern in everything but the sign. No 'charge is made for their hospitality, to be sure; but you are 'shown to a box in the chapel, where everybody puts in more 'than could, with any show of face, be charged for the entertain-'ment; and from this the establishment derives a right good 'income. As to the self-sacrifice of living up there, they are 'obliged to go there young, it is true, to be inured to the climate: 'but it is an infinitely more exciting and various life than any 'other convent can offer; with constant change and company 'through the whole summer; with a hospital for invalids down 'in the valley, which affords another change; and with an annual 'begging-journey to Geneva and this place and all the places 'round for one brother or other, which affords farther change. 'The brother who carved at our supper could speak some English, 'and had just had *Pickwick* given him!—what a humbug he will 'think me when he tries to understand it! If I had had any 'other book of mine with me, I would have given it him, that I 'might have had some chance of being intelligible . . .'

LAUSANNE: 1846.

Convent a tavern in all but sign.

Holy brother and *Pickwick*.

V.

LITERARY LABOUR AT LAUSANNE.

1846.

SOMETHING of the other side of the medal has now to be presented. His letters enable us to see him amid his troubles and difficulties of writing, as faithfully as in his leisure and enjoyments; and when, to the picture thus given of Dickens's home life in Switzerland, some account has been added of the vicissitudes of literary labour undergone in the interval, as complete a representation of the man will be afforded as could be taken from any period

A picture completed.

Lausanne: 1846.

of his career. Of the larger life whereof it is part, the Lausanne life is indeed a perfect microcosm, wanting only the London streets. This was his chief present want, as will shortly be perceived: but as yet the reader does not feel it, and he sees otherwise in all respects at his best the great observer and humourist; interested in everything that commended itself to a thoroughly earnest and eagerly enquiring nature; popular beyond measure with all having intercourse with him; the centre, and very soul, of social enjoyment; letting nothing escape a vision that was not more keen than kindly; and even when apparently most idle, never idle in the sense of his art, but adding day by day to experiences that widened its range, and gave freer and healthier play to an imagination always busily at work, alert and active in a singular degree, and that seemed to be quite untiring. At heart there was a genuine love of nature at all times; and strangely as it may seem to connect this with such forms of humorous delineation as are most identified with his genius, it is yet the literal truth that the impressions of this noble Swiss scenery were with him during the work of many subsequent years: a present and actual, though it might be seldom a directly conscious, influence. When he said afterwards, that, while writing the book on which he is now engaged, he had not seen less clearly each step of the wooden midshipman's staircase, each pew of the church in which Florence was married, or each bed in the dormitory of Dr. Blimber's establishment, because he was himself at the time by the lake of Geneva, he might as truly have said that he saw them the more clearly even because of that circumstance. He wrought his humour to its greatest results by the freedom and force of his imagination; and while the smallest or commonest objects around him were food for the one, the other might have pined or perished without additional higher aliment. Dickens had little love for Wordsworth, but he was himself an example of the truth the great poet never tired of enforcing, that Nature has subtle helps for those who are admitted to become free of her wonders and mysteries.

Great present want.

Influences of nature.

Imaginative needs.

Another noticeable thing in him is impressed upon these letters as upon many also heretofore quoted, for indeed all of them are marvellously exact in the reproduction of his nature. He did not

nk lightly of his work; and the work that occupied him at the e was for the time paramount with him. But the sense he ertained, whether right or wrong, of the importance of what he to do, of the degree to which it concerned others that the er he held should be exercised successfully, and of the esti- e he was justified in forming as the fair measure of its worth, s not carry with it of necessity presumption or self-conceit. y men have had less of either. It was part of the intense indi- iality by which he effected so much, to set the high value which eneral he did upon what he was striving to accomplish; he ld not otherwise have mastered one-half of what he designed; we are able to form an opinion, more just now for ourselves n it might have seemed to us then from others, of the correct- s of such self-judgment. The fussy pretension of small men in t places, and the resolute self-assertion of great men in small es, are things essentially different. *Respice finem.* The exact tive importance of all our pursuits is to be arrived at by nicer istments of the Now and the Hereafter than are possible to temporary judgments; and there have been some indications e his death confirmatory of the belief, that the estimate which hought himself entitled to form of the labours to which his life devoted, will be strengthened, not lessened, by time.

LAUSANNE 1846.

Self-judgments.

The now and the hereafter.

ickens proposed to himself, it will be remembered, to write at sanne not only the first four numbers of his larger book, but Christmas book suggested to him by his fancy of a battle-field; reserving what is to be said of *Dombey* to a later chapter, this its successor will deal only with what he finished as well as n in Switzerland, and will show at what cost even so much achieved amid his other and larger engagements.

Work to be done.

e had restless fancies and misgivings before he settled to his notion. 'I have been thinking this last day or two,' he e on the 25th of July, 'that good Christmas characters ht be grown out of the idea of a man imprisoned for ten ifteen years: his imprisonment being the gap between the ple and circumstances of the first part and the altered people circumstances of the second, and his own changed mind. ugh I shall probably proceed with the Battle idea, I should

Fancies for Christmas books.

LAUSANNE: 1846.

'like to know what you think of this one?' It was afterwards used in a modified shape for the *Tale of Two Cities*. 'I shall 'begin the little story straightway,' he wrote, a few weeks later; 'but I have been dimly conceiving a very ghostly and wild idea, 'which I suppose I must now reserve for the *next* Christmas 'book. *Nous verrons*. It will mature in the streets of Paris 'by night, as well as in London.' This took ultimately the form of the *Haunted Man*, which was not written until the winter of 1848. At last I knew that his first slip was done, and that even his eager busy fancy would not turn him back again.

Second number of *Dombey*.

But other unsatisfied wants and cravings had meanwhile broken out in him, of which I heard near the close of the second number of *Dombey*. The first he had finished at the end of July; and the second, which he began on the 8th of August, he was still at work upon in the first week of September, when this remarkable announcement came to me. It was his first detailed confession of what he felt so continuously, and if that were possible even more strongly as the years went on, that there is no single passage in any of his letters which throws such a flood of illuminative light into the portions of his life which will always awaken the greatest interest. Very much that is to follow must be read by it. 'You can hardly imagine,' he wrote on the 30th of August, 'what infinite pains I take, or what extraordinary 'difficulty I find in getting on FAST. Invention, thank God, 'seems the easiest thing in the world; and I seem to have such 'a preposterous sense of the ridiculous, after this long rest' (it was now over two years since the close of *Chuzzlewit*), 'as to be 'constantly requiring to restrain myself from launching into ex-'travagances in the height of my enjoyment. But the difficulty 'of going at what I call a rapid pace, is prodigious: it is almost 'an impossibility. I suppose this is partly the effect of two years' 'ease, and partly of the absence of streets and numbers of figures.

A personal revelation.

Craving for streets.

'I can't express how much I want these. It seems as if they 'supplied something to my brain, which it cannot bear, when 'busy, to lose. For a week or a fortnight I can write prodigiously 'in a retired place (as at Broadstairs), and a day in London sets 'me up again and starts me. But the toil and labour of writing,

'day after day, without that magic lantern, is IMMENSE!! I LAUSANNE 1846.
'don't say this, at all in low spirits, for we are perfectly com-
'fortable here, and I like the place very much indeed, and the
'people are even more friendly and fond of me than they were
'in Genoa. I only mention it as a curious fact, which I have
'never had an opportunity of finding out before. *My* figures
'seem disposed to stagnate without crowds about them. I wrote Food for fancy.
'very little in Genoa (only the *Chimes*), and fancied myself
'conscious of some such influence there—but Lord! I had two
'miles of streets at least, lighted at night, to walk about in;
'and a great theatre to repair to, every night.' At the close of the letter he told me that he had pretty well matured the general idea of the Christmas book, and was burning to get to work on it. He thought it would be all the better, for a change, to have no fairies or spirits in it, but to make it a simple domestic tale.

In less than a week from this date his second number was finished, his first slip of the little book done, and his confidence greater. They had had wonderful weather, so clear that he could see from the Neuchâtel road the outline of Mont Blanc, sixty miles off, as plainly as if he were standing close under it in the courtyard of the little inn at Chamounix; and, though again it was raining when he wrote, his 'nailed shoes' were by him and his 'great waterproof cloak' in preparation for a 'fourteen-mile 'walk' before dinner. Then, after three days more, came something of a sequel to the confession before made, which will be read with equal interest. 'The absence of any accessible streets 'continues to worry me, now that I have so much to do, in a 'most singular manner. It is quite a little mental phenomenon, 'I should not walk in them in the day time, if they were here, 'I dare say: but at night I want them beyond description. I 'don't seem able to get rid of my spectres unless I can lose them 'in crowds. However, as you say, there are streets in Paris, and 'good suggestive streets too: and trips to London will be nothing 'then. WHEN I have finished the Christmas book, I shall fly to 'Geneva for a day or two, before taking up with *Dombey* again. 'I like this place better and better; and never saw, I think, more 'agreeable people than our little circle is made up of. It is so

Second *Dombey* done.

Curious wants of the mind.

Lausanne: 1846.

A reading of his first *Dombey.*

'little, that one is not "bothered" in the least; and their interest
'in the inimitable seems to strengthen daily. I read them the
'first number, last night "was a" week, with unrelateable success
'and old Mrs. Marcet, who is devilish 'cute, guessed directly
'(but I didn't tell her she was right) that little Paul would die
'They were all so apprehensive that it was a great pleasure to
'read it; and I shall leave here, if all goes well, in a brilliant
'shower of sparks struck out of them by the promised reading of
'the Christmas book.' Little did either of us then imagine to
what these readings were to lead, but even thus early they were
taking in his mind the shape of a sort of jest that the smallest
opportunity of favour might have turned into earnest. In his
very next letter he wrote to me: 'I was thinking the other day
'that in these days of lecturings and readings, a great deal of
'money might possibly be made (if it were not infra dig) by one
'having Readings of one's own books. It would be an *odd* thing
'I think it would take immensely. What do you say? Will you
'step to Dean-street, and see how Miss Kelly's engagement-book
'(it must be an immense volume!) stands? Or shall I take the
'St. James's?' My answer is to be inferred from his rejoinder
but even at this time, while heightening and carrying forward his
jest, I suspected him of graver desires than he cared to avow
and the time was to come, after a dozen years, when with earnest-
ness equal to his own I continued to oppose, for reasons to be
stated in their place, that which he had set his heart upon the
strongly to abandon, and which I still can only wish he had
preferred to surrender with all that seemed to be its enormous
gains! 'I don't think you have exercised your usual judgment
'in taking Covent-garden for me. I doubt it is too large for my
'purpose. However, I shall stand by whatever you propose to
'the proprietors.'

First thought of public readings.

A jesting proposal, with grave results.

Soon came the changes of trouble and vexation I had too surely
seen. 'You remember,' he wrote, 'your objection about the two
'stories. I made over light of it. I ought to have considered
'that I have never before really tried the opening of two together
'having always had one pretty far ahead when I have been driving
'a pair of them. I know it all now. The apparent impossibility

'of getting each into its place, coupled with that craving for 'streets, so thoroughly put me off the track, that, up to Wednes- 'day or Thursday last, I really contemplated, at times, the total 'abandonment of the Christmas book this year, and the limitation 'of my labours to *Dombey and Son!* I cancelled the beginning 'of a first scene—which I have never done before—and, with a 'notion in my head, ran wildly about and about it, and could not 'get the idea into any natural socket. At length, thank Heaven, 'I nailed it all at once; and after going on comfortably up to 'yesterday, and working yesterday from half-past nine to six, I 'was last night in such a state of enthusiasm about it that I think 'I was an inch or two taller. I am a little cooler to-day, with a 'headache to boot; but I really begin to hope you will think it a 'pretty story, with some delicate notions in it agreeably presented, 'and with a good human Christmas groundwork. I fancy I see 'a great domestic effect in the last part.'

LAUSANNE: 1846. Two stories in hand.

That was written on the 20th of September; but six days later changed the picture, and surprised me not a little. I might grudge the space thus given to one of the least important of his books but that the illustration goes farther than the little tale it refers to, and is a picture of him in his moods of writing, with their weakness as well as strength upon him, of a perfect truth and applicability to every period of his life. Movement and change while he was working were not mere restlessness, as we have seen; it was no impatience of labour, or desire of pleasure, that led at such times to his eager craving for the fresh crowds and faces in which he might lose or find the creatures of his fancy; and recollecting this, much hereafter will be understood that might else be very far from clear, in regard to the sensitive conditions under which otherwise he carried on these exertions of his brain. 'I am going to write you' (26th of September) 'a most 'startling piece of intelligence. I fear there may be NO CHRISTMAS 'BOOK! I would give the world to be on the spot to tell you 'this. Indeed I once thought of starting for London to-night. 'I have written nearly a third of it. It promises to be pretty; 'quite a new idea in the story, I hope; but to manage it without 'the supernatural agency now impossible of introduction, and yet

Work under sensitive conditions.

Giving up Christmas book:

Lausanne: 1846.

'to move it naturally within the required space, or with any 'shorter limit than a *Vicar of Wakefield*, I find to be a difficulty 'so perplexing—the past *Dombey* work taken into account—that 'I am fearful of wearing myself out if I go on, and not being able 'to come back to the greater undertaking with the necessary

in alarm for *Dombey*.

'freshness and spirit. If I had nothing but the Christmas book 'to do, I WOULD do it; but I get horrified and distressed beyond 'conception at the prospect of being jaded when I come back to 'the other, and making it a mere race against time. I have 'written the first part; I know the end and upshot of the second; 'and the whole of the third (there are only three in all). I know 'the purport of each character, and the plain idea that each is 'work out; and I have the principal effects sketched on pap 'It cannot end *quite* happily, but will end cheerfully and pl 'santly. But my soul sinks before the commencement of t 'second part—the longest—and the introduction of the und 'idea. (The main one already developed, with interest.) I do 'know how it is. I suppose it is the having been almost co

The old craving.

'stantly at work in this quiet place; and the dread for t '*Dombey;* and the not being able to get rid of it, in noise a 'bustle. The beginning two books together is also, no doubt 'fruitful source of the difficulty; for I am now sure I could n 'have invented the *Carol* at the commencement of the *Chuzz* '*wit*, or gone to a new book from the *Chimes*. But this is certai 'I am sick, giddy, and capriciously despondent. I have ba 'nights; am full of disquietude and anxiety; and am constantl 'haunted by the idea that I am wasting the marrow of the large 'book, and ought to be at rest. One letter that I wrote yo 'before this, I have torn up. In that the Christmas book wa 'wholly given up for this year: but I now resolve to make on

Change of scene to be tried.

'effort more. I will go to Geneva to-morrow, and try on Monda 'and Tuesday whether I can get on at all bravely, in the change 'scene. If I cannot, I am convinced that I had best hold m 'hand at once; and not fritter my spirits and hope away, wit 'that long book before me. You may suppose that the matter 'very grave when I can so nearly abandon anything in which 'am deeply interested, and fourteen or fifteen close MS pages

'which, that have made me laugh and cry, are lying in my desk. GENEVA: 1846.
'Writing this letter at all, I have a great misgiving that the letter
'I shall write you on Tuesday night will not make it better. Take
'it, for Heaven's sake, as an extremely serious thing, and not a
'fancy of the moment. Last Saturday after a very long day's
'work, and last Wednesday after finishing the first part, I was full
'of eagerness and pleasure. At all other times since I began, I
'have been brooding and brooding over the idea that it was a
'wild thing to dream of, ever: and that I ought to be at rest for
'the *Dombey*.'

The letter came, written on Wednesday not Tuesday night, and it left the question still unsettled. 'When I came here' (Geneva, 30th of September) 'I had a blood-shot eye; and my head was 'so bad, with a pain across the brow, that I thought I must have 'got cupped. I have become a great deal better, however, and 'feel quite myself again to-day. . . . I still have not made up my 'mind as to what I CAN do with the Christmas book. I would 'give any money that it were possible to consult with you. I 'have begun the second part this morning, and have done a very 'fair morning's work at it, but I do not feel it *in hand* within the 'necessary space and divisions: and I have a great uneasiness in Disquietudes of authorship, 'the prospect of falling behind hand with the other labour, which 'is so transcendantly important. I feel quite sure that unless I '(being in reasonably good state and spirits) like the Christmas 'book myself, I had better not go on with it; but had best keep 'my strength for *Dombey*, and keep my number in advance. On 'the other hand I am dreadfully averse to abandoning it, and am 'so torn between the two things that I know not what to do. It 'is impossible to express the wish I have that I could take counsel Wanting counsel. 'with you. Having begun the second part I will go on here, 'to-morrow and Friday (Saturday, the Talfourds come to us at 'Lausanne, leaving on Monday morning), unless I see new 'reason to give it up in the meanwhile. Let it stand thus—that 'my next Monday's letter shall finally decide the question. But 'if you have not already told Bradbury and Evans of my last 'letter I think it will now be best to do so. . . . This non-'publication of a Christmas book, if it must be, I try to think

Geneva: 1846.

'light of with the greater story just begun, and with this *Ba*
'*of Life* story (of which I really think the leading idea is ve
'pretty) lying by me, for future use. But I would like you
'consider, in the event of my not going on, how best, by tim
'announcement, in November's or December's *Dombey*, I m
'seem to hold the ground prospectively. . . Heaven send me

Still doubtful.

'good deliverance! If I don't do it, it will be the first time
'ever abandoned anything I had once taken in hand; and I sh
'not have abandoned it until after a most desperate fight.
'could do it, but for the *Dombey*, as easily as I did last year
'the year before. But I cannot help falling back on that co
'tinually: and this, combined with the peculiar difficulties of t
'story for a Christmas book, and my being out of sorts, d
courages me sadly. . . . Kate is here, and sends her love.' . .

A postscript was added on the following day. 'Georgy has co
'over from Lausanne, and joins with Kate, &c., &c. My he
'remains greatly better. My eye is recovering its old hue
'beautiful white, tinged with celestial blue. If I hadn't co
'here, I think I should have had some bad low fever. The si
'of the rushing Rhone seemed to stir my blood again. I do
'think I shall want to be cupped, this bout; but it looked, at c
'time, worse than I have confessed to you. If I have any retu
'I will have it done immediately.'

Report of Geneva.

He stayed two days longer at Geneva, which he found to b
very good place; pleasantly reporting himself as quite dismay
at first by the sight of gas in it, and as trembling at the noise
its streets, which he pronounced to be fully equal to the uproar
Richmond in Surrey; but deriving from it some sort of bene
both in health and in writing. So far his trip had been successf
though he had to leave the place hurriedly to welcome his Engli
visitors to Rosemont.

A new social experience.

One social and very novel experience he had in his ho
however, the night before he left, which may be told before
hastens back to Lausanne; for it could hardly now offend a
one even if the names were given. 'And now sir I will descri
'modestly, tamely, literally, the visit to the small select ci
'which I promised should make your hair stand on end. In

'hotel were a Mother and a Daughter, who came to the Peschiere GENEVA: 1846.
'shortly before we left it, and who have a deep admiration for
'your humble servant the inimitable B. They are both very Mother and Daughter.
'clever. Daughter, extremely well-informed in languages living
'and dead, books, and gossip; very pretty; with two little
'children, and not yet five and twenty. Mother, plump, fresh,
'and rosy; matronly, but full of spirits and good looks. Nothing
'would serve them but we *must* dine with them; and accordingly,
'on Friday at six, we went down to their room. I knew them to
'be rather odd. For instance, I have known the Mother, *full*
'*dressed*, walk alone through the streets of Genoa, the squalid
'Italian bye streets, to the Governor's soirée; and announce her-
'self at the palace of state, by knocking at the door. I have also
'met the Daughter full dressed, without any cap or bonnet,
'walking a mile to the opera, with all sorts of jingling jewels A ladies' dinner.
'about her, beside a sedan chair in which sat enthroned her
'mama. Consequently, I was not surprised at such little sparkles
'in the conversation (from the young lady) as "Oh God what a
'"sermon we had here, last Sunday!" "And did you ever read
'"such infernal trash as Mrs. Gore's?"—and the like. Still, but
'for Kate and Georgy (who were decidedly in the way, as we
'agreed afterwards), I should have thought it all very funny; and,
'as it was, I threw the ball back again, was mighty free and easy,
'made some rather broad jokes, and was highly applauded.
'"You smoke, don't you?" said the young lady, in a pause of this
'kind of conversation. "Yes," I said, "I generally take a cigar
'"after dinner when I am alone." "I'll give you a good 'un,"
'said she, "when we go up-stairs." Well, sir, in due course we
'went up stairs, and there we were joined by an American lady American reinforcements.
'residing in the same hotel, who looked like what we call in old
'England "a reg'lar Bunter"—fluffy face (rouged); considerable
'development of figure; one groggy eye; blue satin dress made
'low with short sleeves, and shoes of the same. Also a daughter;
'face likewise fluffy; figure likewise developed; dress likewise
'low, with short sleeves, and shoes of the same; and one eye not
'yet actually groggy, but going to be. American lady married at
'sixteen; American daughter sixteen now, often mistaken for

Geneva: 1846.

'sisters, &c. &c. &c. When that was over, the younger of ou
'entertainers brought out a cigar box, and gave me a cigar, mad
'of negrohead she said, which would quell an elephant in s
'whiffs. The box was full of cigarettes—good large ones, ma

Feminine smoking party.

'of pretty strong tobacco; I always smoke them here, and use
'to smoke them at Genoa, and I knew them well. When I
'lighted my cigar, Daughter lighted hers, at mine; leaned again
'the mantelpiece, in conversation with me; put out her stomac
'folded her arms, and with her pretty face cocked up sidewa
'and her cigarette smoking away like a Manchester cotton mi
'laughed, and talked, and smoked, in the most gentleman
'manner I ever beheld. Mother immediately lighted her ciga
'American lady immediately lighted hers; and in five minutes t
'room was a cloud of smoke, with us four in the centre pulling aw
'bravely, while American lady related stories of her "Hookah
'up stairs, and described different kinds of pipes. But even thi
'was not all. For presently two Frenchmen came in, with whom
'and the American lady, Daughter sat down to whist. Th

The modest sex.

'Frenchmen smoked of course (they were really modest gentl
'men and seemed dismayed), and Daughter played for the ne
'hour or two with a cigar continually in her mouth—never out
'it. She certainly smoked six or eight. Mother gave in soon
'I think she only did it out of vanity. American lady had be
'smoking all the morning. I took no more; and Daughter a
'the Frenchmen had it all to themselves.

Taking it coolly.

'Conceive this in a great hotel, with not only their ow
'servants, but half a dozen waiters coming constantly in and ou
'I showed no atom of surprise, but I never *was* so surprised,
'ridiculously taken aback, in my life; for in all my experience
'"ladies" of one kind and another, I never saw a woman—n
'a basket woman or a gipsy—smoke, before!' He lived to ha
larger and wider experience, but there was enough to startle
well as amuse him in the scene described.

But now Saturday is come; he has hurried back for the frie
who are on their way to his cottage; and on his arrival, ev
before they have appeared, he writes to tell me his better news
himself and his work.

'In the breathless interval' (Rosemont: 3rd of October) LAUSANNE: 1846.
'between our return from Geneva and the arrival of the Talfourds
'(expected in an hour or two), I cannot do better than write to
'you. For I think you will be well pleased if I anticipate my
'promise, and Monday, at the same time. I have been greatly
'better at Geneva, though I still am made uneasy by occasional
'giddiness and headache: attributable, I have not the least
'doubt, to the absence of streets. There is an idea here, too,
'that people are occasionally made despondent and sluggish in In better heart.
'their spirits by this great mass of still water, lake Leman. At
'any rate I have been very uncomfortable: at any rate I am, I
'hope, greatly better: and (lastly) at any rate I hope and trust,
'*now*, the Christmas book will come in due course!! I have had
'three very good days' work at Geneva, and trust I may finish
'the second part (the third is the shortest) by this day week.
'Whenever I finish it, I will send you the first two together. I
'do not think they can begin to illustrate it, until the third
'arrives; for it is a single-minded story, as it were, and an artist Christmas book resumed.
'should know the end: which I don't think very likely, unless he
'reads it.' Then, after relating a superhuman effort he was
making to lodge his visitors in his doll's house ('I didn't like the
'idea of turning them out at night. It is so dark in these lanes
'and groves, when the moon's not bright'), he sketched for me
what he possibly might, and really did, accomplish. He would
by great effort finish the small book on the 20th; would fly to
Geneva for a week to work a little at *Dombey*, if he felt 'pretty
'sound;' in any case would finish his number three by the 10th
of November; and on that day would start for Paris: 'so that, Intentions and hope.
'instead of resting unprofitably here, I shall be using my interval
'of idleness to make the journey and get into a new house, and
'shall hope so to put a pinch of salt on the tail of the sliding
'number in advance. . . . . I am horrified at the idea of getting
'the blues (and bloodshots) again.' Though I did not then
know how gravely ill he had been, I was fain to remind him that
it was bad economy to make business out of rest itself; but I
received prompt confirmation that all was falling out as he wished.
The Talfourds stayed two days: 'and I think they were very

Lausanne: 1846.

Thomas Noon Talfourd.

'happy. He was in his best aspect; the manner so well known
'to us, not the less loveable for being laughable; and if you
'could have seen him going round and round the coach that
'brought them, as a preliminary to paying the voiturier to whom
'he couldn't speak, in a currency he didn't understand, you never
'would have forgotten it.' His friends left Lausanne on the 5th
and five days later he sent me two thirds of the manuscript of his
Christmas book.

VI.

GENEVESE REVOLUTION AND BATTLE OF LIFE.

1846.

An arrival of MS.

'I SEND you in twelve letters, counting this as one, the first two
'parts (thirty-five slips) of the Christmas book. I have two
'present anxieties respecting it. One to know that you have
'received it safely; and the second to know how it strikes you.
'Be sure you read the first and second parts together . . .
'There seems to me to be interest in it, and a pretty idea; and it
'is unlike the others . . . There will be some minor points for
'consideration: as, the necessity for some slight alteration in one
'or two of the Doctor's speeches in the first part; and whether it
'should be called the "The Battle of Life. A Love Story"—to
'express both a love story in the common acceptation of the
'phrase, and also a story of love; with one or two other things of
'that sort. We can moot these by and by. I made a tremendous
'day's work of it yesterday and was horribly excited—so I am
'going to rush out, as fast as I can: being a little used up, and
'sick . . But never say die! I have been to the glass to look at
'my eye. Pretty bright!'

Large sale of *Dombey*.

I made it brighter next day by telling him that the first number
of *Dombey* had outstripped in sale the first of *Chuzzlewit* by more
than twelve thousand copies; and his next letter, sending the
close of his little tale, showed his need of the comfort my pleasant

news had given him. 'I really do not know what this story is 'worth. I am so floored: wanting sleep, and never having had 'my head free from it for this month past. I think there are some 'places in this last part which I may bring better together in the 'proof, and where a touch or two may be of service; particularly 'in the scene between Craggs and Michael Warden, where, as it 'stands, the interest seems anticipated. But I shall have the 'benefit of your suggestions, and my own then cooler head, I 'hope; and I will be very careful with the proofs, and keep them 'by me as long as I can . . . Mr. Britain must have another 'Christian name, then? "Aunt Martha" is the Sally of whom 'the Doctor speaks in the first part. Martha is a better name. 'What do you think of the concluding paragraph? Would you 'leave it for happiness' sake? It is merely experimental . . . I 'am flying to Geneva to-morrow morning.' (That was on the 18th of October; and on the 20th he wrote from Geneva) 'We came 'here yesterday, and we shall probably remain until Katey's birth-'day, which is next Thursday week. I shall fall to work on num-'ber three of *Dombey* as soon as I can. At present I am the 'worse for wear, but nothing like as much so as I expected to be 'on Sunday last. I had not been able to sleep for some time, 'and had been hammering away, morning, noon, and night. A 'bottle of hock on Monday, when Elliotson dined with us (he 'went away homeward yesterday morning), did me a world of 'good; the change comes in the very nick of time; and I feel in 'Dombeian spirits already . . . But I have still rather a damaged 'head, aching a good deal occasionally, as it is doing now, though 'I have not been cupped—yet . . . I dreamed all last week that 'the *Battle of Life* was a series of chambers impossible to be got 'to rights or got out of, through which I wandered drearily all 'night. On Saturday night I don't think I slept an hour. I was 'perpetually roaming through the story, and endeavouring to dove-'tail the revolution here into the plot. The mental distress, 'quite horrible.'

LAUSANNE: 1846.

Christmas book doubts.

GENEVA: 20 Oct.

Remains of over-work.

Of the 'revolution' he had written to me a week before, from Lausanne; where the news had just reached them, that, upon the Federal Diet decreeing the expulsion of the Jesuits, the Roman

Rising against the Jesuits.

Geneva: 1846.

Catholic cantons had risen against the decree, the result being t
the Protestants had deposed the grand council and establishe
provisional government, dissolving the Catholic league. I
interest in this, and prompt seizure of what really was brou
into issue by the conflict, is every way characteristic of Dicke
'You will know,' he had written from Lausanne on the 11th
October, 'long before you get this, all about the revolution
'Geneva. There were stories of plots against the Governm

A revolution.

'when I was there, but I didn't believe them; for all sorts of
'are always afloat against the radicals, and wherever there i
'consul from a Catholic Power the most monstrous fictions are
'perpetual circulation against them: as in this very place, wh
'the Sardinian consul was gravely whispering the other day tha
'society called the Homicides had been formed, whereof
'president of the council of state, the O'Connell of Switzerl
'and a clever fellow, was a member; who were sworn on sk
'and cross-bones to exterminate men of property, and so fo
'There was a great stir here in Lausanne, on the day of the fi

The fight in Geneva.

'in Geneva. We heard the guns (they shook this house) all d
'and seven hundred men marched out of the town to go and h
'the radical party—arriving at Geneva just after it was all o
'There is no doubt they had received secret help from Lausan
'for a powder barrel, found by some of the Genevese popul
'with "Canton de Vaud" painted on it, was carried on a p
'about the streets as a standard, to show that they were sym
'thized with by friends outside. It was a poor mean fight enou
'I am told by Lord Vernon, who was present and who was w

An eye-witness.

'us last night. The Government was afraid; having no c
'fidence whatever, I dare say, in its own soldiers; and the can
'were fired everywhere except at the opposite party, who (I m
'the revolutionists) had barricaded a bridge with an omnibus o
'and certainly in the beginning might have been turned with e

Rifle against cannon.

'The precision of the common men with the rifle was especi
'shown by a small party of *five*, who waited on the ramparts n
'one of the gates of the town, to turn a body of soldiery who w
'coming in to the Government assistance. They picked
'every officer and struck him down instantly, the moment

'party appeared; there were three or four of them; upon GENEVA: 1846.
'which the soldiers gravely turned round and walked off. I dare
'say there are not fifty men in Lausanne who wouldn't click your Precision of aim.
'card off a target a hundred and fifty yards away, at least. I have
'seen them, time after time, fire across a great ravine as wide
'as the ornamental ground in St. James's-park, and never miss the
'bull's-eye.

'It is a horribly ungentlemanly thing to say here, though I *do*
'say it without the least reserve—but my sympathy is all with the
'radicals. I don't know any subject on which this indomitable
'people have so good a right to a strong feeling as Catholicity The true objection to Roman Catholicism.
'—if not as a religion, clearly as a means of social degradation.
'They know what it is. They live close to it. They have Italy
'beyond their mountains. They can compare the effect of the
'two systems at any time in their own valleys; and their dread
'of it, and their horror of the introduction of Catholic priests
'and emissaries into their towns, seem to me the most rational
'feeling in the world. Apart from this, you have no conception
'of the preposterous, insolent little aristocracy of Geneva: the Genevese 'aristocracy.'
'most ridiculous caricature the fancy can suggest of what we know
'in England. I was talking to two famous gentlemen (very intel-
'ligent men) of that place, not long ago, who came over to invite
'me to a sort of reception there—which I declined. Really their
'talk about "the people" and "the masses," and the necessity
'they would shortly be under of shooting a few of them as an
'example for the rest, was a kind of monstrosity one might have
'heard at Genoa. The audacious insolence and contempt of the
'people by their newspapers, too, is quite absurd. It is difficult
'to believe that men of sense can be such donkeys politically. It
'was precisely such a state of things that brought about the
'change in Lausanne. There was a most respectful petition pre-
'sented on the Jesuit question, signed by its tens of thousands of
'small farmers; the regular peasants of the canton, all splendidly Swiss 'rabble.'
'taught in public schools, and intellectually as well as physically
'a most remarkable body of labouring men. This document is
'treated by the gentlemanly party with the most sublime con-
'tempt, and the signatures are said to be the signatures of "the

Geneva: 1846.

'"rabble." Upon which, each man of the rabble shoulders his 'rifle, and walks in upon a given day agreed upon among them to 'Lausanne; and the gentlemanly party walk out without striking 'a blow.'

Such traces of the 'revolution' as he found upon his present visit to Geneva he described in writing to me from the hôtel de l'Ecu on the 20th of October. 'You never would suppose from 'the look of this town that there had been anything revolutionary 'going on. Over the window of my old bedroom there is a great 'hole made by a cannon-ball in the house-front; and two of the 'bridges are under repair. But these are small tokens which any 'thing else might have brought about as well. The people are all 'at work. The little streets are rife with every sight and sound 'of industry; the place is as quiet by ten o'clock as Lincoln's-inn 'fields; and the only outward and visible sign of public interest 'in political events is a little group at every street corner, reading 'a public announcement from the new Government of the forth 'coming election of state-officers, in which the people are re- 'minded of their importance as a republican institution, and 'desired to bear in mind their dignity in all their proceedings. 'Nothing very violent or bad could go on with a community so 'well educated as this. It is the best antidote to American expe- 'riences, conceivable. As to the nonsense "the gentlemanly '"interest" talk about, their opposition to property and so forth, 'there never was such mortal absurdity. One of the principal 'leaders in the late movement has a stock of watches and jewellery 'here of immense value—and had, during the disturbance—per- 'fectly unprotected. James Fazy has a rich house and a valuable 'collection of pictures; and, I will be bound to say, twice as much 'to lose as half the conservative declaimers put together. This 'house, the liberal one, is one of the most richly furnished and 'luxurious hotels on the continent. And if I were a Swiss with a 'hundred thousand pounds, I would be as steady against the 'Catholic cantons and the propagation of Jesuitism as any radical 'among 'em: believing the dissemination of Catholicity to be the 'most horrible means of political and social degradation left in 'the world. Which these people, thoroughly well educated, know

Traces left by revolution.

Abettors of revolution.

Where the shoe pinches.

'perfectly . . . The boys of Geneva were very useful in bringing 'materials for the construction of the barricades on the bridges; 'and the enclosed song may amuse you. They sing it to a tune 'that dates from the great French revolution—a very good one.' LAUSANNE 1846.

But revolutions may be small as well as their heroes, and while he thus was sending me his Gamin de Genève I was sending him news of a sudden change in Whitefriars which had quite as vivid interest for him. Not much could be told him at first, but his curiosity instantly arose to fever pitch. 'In reference to that '*Daily News* revolution,' he wrote from Geneva on the 26th, 'I have been walking and wandering all day through a perfect 'Miss Burney's Vauxhall of conjectural dark walks. Heaven 'send you enlighten me fully on Wednesday, or number three 'will suffer!' Two days later he resumed, as he was beginning his journey back to Lausanne. 'I am in a great state of excite- 'ment on account of your intelligence, and desperately anxious to 'know all about it. I shall be put out to an unspeakable extent 'if I don't find your letter awaiting me. God knows there has 'been small comfort for either of us in the *D. N.*'s nine months.' There was not much to tell then, and there is less now; but at last the discomfort was over for us both, as I had been unable to reconcile myself to a longer continuance of the service I had given in Whitefriars since he quitted it. The subject may be left with the remark made upon it in his first letter after returning to Rosemont. 'I certainly am very glad of the result of the *Daily* 'News business, though my gladness is dashed with melancholy 'to think that you should have toiled there so long, to so little 'purpose. I escaped more easily. However, it is all passed now. 'As to the undoubted necessity of the course you took, I have not 'a grain of question in my mind. That, being what you are, 'you had only one course to take and have taken it, I no more 'doubt than that the Old Bailey is not Westminster Abbey. In the 'utmost sum at which you value yourself, you were bound to 'leave; and now you *have* left, you will come to Paris, and there, 'and at home again, we'll have, please God, the old kind of 'evenings and the old life again, as it used to be before those 'daily nooses caught us by the legs, and sometimes tripped us up.

Smaller revolution in Whitefriars.

Daily News changes.

Thoughts for the future.

Lausanne: 1846.

'Make a vow (as I have done) never to go down that court with 'the little news-shop at the corner, any more, and let us swear by 'Jack Straw as in the ancient times. . . I am beginning to get 'over my sorrow for your nights up aloft in Whitefriars, and to 'feel nothing but happiness in the contemplation of your enfran-'chisement. God bless you!'

Battle of Life.

The time was now shortening for him at Lausanne; but before my sketches of his pleasant days there close, the little story of [illegible] Christmas book may be made complete by a few extracts fr[illegible] the letters that followed immediately upon the departure of [illegible] Talfourds. Without comment they will explain its closing touch[illegible] his own consciousness of the difficulties in working out the [illegible] within limits too confined not to render its proper developm[illegible] imperfect, and his ready tact in dealing with objection and s[illegible] gestion from without. His condition while writing it did not warrant me in pressing what I might otherwise have thou[illegible] necessary: but as the little story finally left his hands, it had points not unworthy of him; and a sketch of its design will render the fragments from his letters more intelligible. I read it lately with a sense that its general tone of quiet beauty deserved well the praise which Jeffrey in those days had given it. 'I like and 'admire the *Battle* extremely,' he said in a letter on its publication, sent me by Dickens and not included in Lord Cockburn's Memoir. 'It is better than any other man alive could have 'written, and has passages as fine as anything that ever came 'from the man himself. The dance of the sisters in that autumn 'orchard is of itself worth a dozen inferior tales, and their reunion 'at the close, and indeed all the serious parts, are beautiful, some 'traits of Clemency charming.'

Character of it.

Jeffrey's opinion.

Yet it was probably here the fact, as with the *Chimes*, that the serious parts were too much interwoven with the tale to render the subject altogether suitable to the old mirth-bringing season; but this had also some advantages. The story is all about two sisters, the younger of whom, Marion, sacrifices her own affec[illegible] to give happiness to the elder, Grace. But Grace had alre[illegible] made the same sacrifice for this younger sister; life's first [illegible] hardest battle had been won by her before the incidents be[illegible]

Sketch of story.

and when she is first seen, she is busying herself to bring about her sister's marriage with Alfred Heathfield, whom she has herself loved, and whom she has kept wholly unconscious, by a quiet change in her bearing to him, of what his own still disengaged heart would certainly not have rejected. Marion, however, had earlier discovered this, though it is not until her victory over herself that Alfred knows it; and meanwhile he is become her betrothed. The sisters thus shown at the opening, one believing her love undiscovered and the other bent for the sake of that love on surrendering her own, each practising concealment and both unselfishly true, form a pretty and tender picture. The second part is intended to give to Marion's flight the character of an elopement; and so to manage this as to show her all the time unchanged to the man she is pledged to, yet flying from, was the author's difficulty. One Michael Warden is the *deus ex machinâ* by whom it is solved, hardly with the usual skill; but there is much art in rendering his pretensions to the hand of Marion, whose husband he becomes after an interval of years, the means of closing against him all hope of success, in the very hour when her own act might seem to be opening it to him. During the same interval Grace, believing Marion to be gone with Warden, becomes Alfred's wife; and not until reunion after six years' absence is the truth entirely known to her. The struggle, to all of them, has been filled and chastened with sorrow; but joy revisits them at its close. Hearts are not broken by the duties laid upon them; nor is life shown to be such a perishable holiday, that amidst noble sorrow and generous self-denial it must lose its capacity for happiness. The tale thus justifies its place in the Christmas series. What Jeffrey says of Clemency, too, may suggest another word. The story would not be Dickens's if we could not discover in it the power peculiar to him of presenting the commonest objects with freshness and beauty, of detecting in the homeliest forms of life much of its rarest loveliness, and of springing easily upward from everyday realities into regions of imaginative thought. To this happiest direction of his art, Clemency and her husband render new tribute; and in her more especially, once again, we recognize one of those true souls who

LAUSANNE: 1846.

A difficulty.

Old characteristics.

Lausanne: 1846.

fill so large a space in his writings, for whom the lowest seats at life's feast are commonly kept, but whom he moves and welcomes to a more fitting place among the prized and honoured at the upper tables.

Notes on the *Battle of Life*.

'I wonder whether you foresaw the end of the Christmas book! 'There are two or three places in which I can make it prettier, 'I think, by slight alterations. . . . I trust to Heaven you may 'like it. What an affecting story I could have made of it in one 'octavo volume. Oh to think of the printers transforming my 'kindly cynical old father into Doctor Taddler!' (28th of October.) Here may be interposed extracts from letters of two years' later date to Sir Edward Lytton. 'What you said of the '*Battle of Life* gave me great pleasure. I was thoroughly 'wretched at having to use the idea for so short a story. I did 'not see its full capacity until it was too late to think of another 'subject; and I have always felt that I might have done a great 'deal with it, if I had taken it for the groundwork of a more 'extended book.' (10th April, 1848.) 'But for an insuperable 'aversion I have to trying back in such a case, I should certainly 'forge that bit of metal again, as you suggest. One of these days 'perhaps' . . . (4th of August, 1848.)

His own comments.

'Do you think it worth while, in the illustrations, to throw the 'period back at all for the sake of anything good in the costume? 'The story may have happened at any time within a hundred 'years. Is it worth having coats and gowns of dear old Gold- 'smith's day? or thereabouts? I really don't know what to say.

Date of story.

'The probability is, if it has not occurred to you or to the artists, 'that it is hardly worth considering; but I ease myself of it by 'throwing it out to you. It may be already too late, or you may 'see reason to think it best to "stick to the *last*" (I feel it 'necessary to italicize the joke), and abide by the ladies' and 'gentlemen's spring and winter fashions of this time. Whatever 'you think best, in this as in all other things, is best, I am sure. '. . . I would go, in the illustrations, for "beauty" as much as 'possible; and I should like each part to have a general illus- 'tration to it at the beginning, shadowing out its drift and bear- 'ing: much as Browne goes at that kind of thing on *Dom*

'covers. I don't think I should fetter your discretion in the 'matter farther. The better it is illustrated, the better I shall 'be pleased of course.' (29th of October.) LAUSANNE: 1846.

'. . . I only write to say that it is of no use my writing at 'length, until I have heard from you; and that I will wait until 'I shall have read your promised communication (as my father 'would call it) to-morrow. I have glanced over the proofs of 'the last part and really don't wonder that the marriage of Grace 'and Alfred should seem rather unsatisfactory to you: some of 'the most extravagant mistakes occurring in Clemency's account 'to Warden. Whatever is done about that must be done with 'the lightest hand, for the reader MUST take something for 'granted; but I think it next to impossible, without dreadful 'injury to the effect, to introduce a scene between Marion and 'Michael. The introduction must be in the scene between the 'sisters, and must be put, mainly, into the mouth of Grace. 'Rely upon it there is no other way, in keeping with the spirit 'of the tale. With this amendment, and a touch here and there 'in the last part (I know exactly where they will come best), I 'think it may be pretty and affecting, and comfortable too . . .' (31st of October.) Reply to criticism.

'. . . I shall hope to touch upon the Christmas book as soon 'as I get your opinion. I wouldn't do it without. I am delighted 'to hear of noble old Stanny. Give my love to him, and tell 'him I think of turning Catholic. It strikes me (it may have 'struck you perhaps) that another good place for introducing a 'few lines of dialogue, is at the beginning of the scene between 'Grace and her husband, where he speaks about the messenger 'at the gate.' (4th of November.) Stanfield's offer of illustrations.

'Before I reply to your questions I wish to remark generally 'of the third part that all the passion that can be got into it, 'through my interpretation at all events, is there. I know that, 'by what it cost me; and I take it to be, as a question of art and 'interest, in the very nature of the story that it *should* move at a 'swift pace after the sisters are in each other's arms again. 'Anything after that would drag like lead, and must. . . . Now 'for your questions. I don't think any little scene with Marion

Lausanne: 1846.

'and anybody can prepare the way for the last paragraph of the 'tale: I don't think anything but a printer's line *can* go between 'it and Warden's speech. A less period than ten years? Yes. 'I see no objection to six. I have no doubt you are right. Any 'word from Alfred in his misery? Impossible: you might as well

Doubts of third part.

'try to speak to somebody in an express train. The preparation 'for his change is in the first part, and he kneels down beside her 'in that return scene. He is left alone with her, as it were, in 'the world. I am quite confident it is wholly impossible for me 'to alter that. . . . But (keep your eye on me) when Marion 'went away, she left a letter for Grace in which she charged her 'to encourage the love that Alfred would conceive for her, and 'forewarned her that years would pass before they met again,

Strengthening the close.

'&c. &c. This coming out in the scene between the sisters, and 'something like it being expressed in the opening of the little 'scene between Grace and her husband before the messenger at 'the gate, will make (I hope) a prodigious difference; and I will 'try to put in something with Aunt Martha and the Doctor that 'shall carry the tale back more distinctly and unmistakeably to 'the battle-ground. I hope to make these alterations next week, 'and to send the third part back to you before I leave here. If

Farther objection invited.

'you think it can still be improved after that, say so to me in 'Paris and I will go at it again. I wouldn't have it limp, if it can 'fly. I say nothing to you of a great deal of this being already 'expressed in the sentiment of the beginning, because your 'delicate perception knows all that already. Observe for the 'artists. Grace will now only have *one child*—little Marion.' . . . . (At night, on same day.) . . 'You recollect that I asked 'you to read it all together, for I knew that I was working for 'that? But I have no doubt of *your* doubts, and will do what I 'have said. . . . I had thought of marking the time in the lit[tle] 'story, and will do so. . . . Think, once more, of the peri[od] 'between the second and third parts. I will do the same.' (7th November.)

'I hope you will think the third part (when you read it in ty[pe] 'with these amendments) very much improved. I think it [is] 'If there should still be anything wanting, in your opinion, p[ray]

'suggest it to me in Paris. I am bent on having it right, if I 'can. . . . If in going over the proofs you find the tendency to 'blank verse (I *cannot* help it, when I am very much in earnest) 'too strong, knock out a word's brains here and there.' (13th of November. Sending the proofs back.) LAUSANNE 1846. Tendency to blank verse.

'... Your Christmas book illustration-news makes me jump 'for joy. I will write you at length to-morrow. I should like 'this dedication: This Christmas Book is cordially inscribed 'To my English Friends in Switzerland. Just those two lines, 'and nothing more. When I get the proofs again I think I 'may manage another word or two about the battle-field, with 'advantage. I am glad you like the alterations. I feel that 'they make it complete, and that it would have been incom-'plete without your suggestions.' (21st of November. From Paris.) Dedication.

I had managed, as a glad surprise for him, to enlist both Stanfield and Maclise in the illustration of the story, in addition to the distinguished artists whom the publishers had engaged for it, Leech and Richard Doyle; and among the subjects contributed by Stanfield are three morsels of English landscape which had a singular charm for Dickens at the time, and seem to me still of their kind quite faultless. I may add a curious fact, never mentioned until now. In the illustration which closes the second part of the story, where the festivities to welcome the bridegroom at the top of the page contrast with the flight of the bride represented below, Leech made the mistake of supposing that Michael Warden had taken part in the elopement, and has introduced his figure with that of Marion. We did not discover this until too late for remedy, the publication having then been delayed expressly for these drawings, to the utmost limit; and it is highly characteristic of Dickens, and of the true regard he had for this fine artist, that, knowing the pain he must give in such circumstances by objection or complaint, he preferred to pass it silently. Nobody made remark upon it, and there the illustration still stands; but any one who reads the tale carefully will at once perceive what havoc it makes of one of the most delicate turns in it. Artists. Stanfield's designs. Grave mistake by Leech. How dealt with by Dickens.

Lausanne: 1846.

First impulse.

'When I first saw it, it was with a horror and agony not to be 'expressed. Of course I need not tell *you*, my dear fellow, 'Warden has no business in the elopement scene. *He* was never 'there! In the first hot sweat of this surprise and novelty, I was 'going to implore the printing of that sheet to be stopped, and 'the figure taken out of the block. But when I thought of the 'pain this might give to our kind-hearted Leech; and that what 'is such a monstrous enormity to me, as never having entered my 'brain, may not so present itself to others, I became more com-

Kindly after-thought.

'posed; though the fact is wonderful to me. No doubt a great 'number of copies will be printed by the time this reaches you, 'and therefore I shall take it for granted that it stands as it is. 'Leech otherwise is very good, and the illustrations altogether are 'by far the best that have been done for any of the Christmas 'books. You know how I build up temples in my mind that are 'not made with hands (or expressed with pen and ink, I am 'afraid), and how liable I am to be disappointed in these things. 'But I really am *not* disappointed in this case. Quietness and 'beauty are preserved throughout. Say everything to Mac and 'Stanny, more than everything! It is a delight to look at these 'little landscapes of the dear old boy. How gentle and elegant, 'and yet how manly and vigorous, they are! I have a perfect joy 'in them.'

Last days in Switzerland.

Of the few days that remained of his Lausanne life, before he journeyed to Paris, there is not much requiring to be said. His work had continued during the whole of the month before departure to occupy him so entirely as to leave room for little else, and even occasional letters to very dear friends at home were intermitted. Here are two examples of many. 'I will write to 'Landor as soon as I can possibly make time, but I really am 'much at my desk perforce, and so full of work, whether I am 'there or elsewhere, between the Christmas book and *Dom* 'that it is the most difficult thing in the world for me to make 'my mind to write a letter to any one but you. I ought to have 'written to Macready. I wish you would tell him, with my love, 'how I am situated in respect of pen, ink, and paper. One of 'the Lausanne papers, treating of free trade, has been

'copious lately in its mention of LORD GOBDEN. Fact; and I think it a good name.' Then, as the inevitable time approached, he cast about him for such comfort as the coming change might bring, to set against the sorrow of it; and began to think of Paris, 'in a less romantic and more homely contemplation of the pic-'ture,' as not wholly undesirable. 'I have no doubt that constant 'change, too, is indispensable to me when I am at work: and at 'times something more than a doubt will force itself upon me 'whether there is not something in a Swiss valley that disagrees 'with me. Certainly, whenever I live in Switzerland again, it 'shall be on the hill-top. Something of the *goître* and *cretin* 'influence seems to settle on my spirits sometimes, on the lower 'ground.* How sorry, ah yes! how sorry I shall be to leave the 'little society nevertheless. We have been thoroughly good-'humoured and agreeable together, and I'll always give a hurrah 'for the Swiss and Switzerland.'

LAUSANNE: 1846.

Lord Gobden and free trade.

Needs while at work.

One or two English travelling by Lausanne had meanwhile greeted him as they were passing home, and a few days given him by Elliotson had been an enjoyment without a drawback. It was now the later autumn, very high winds were coursing through the valley, and his last letter but one described the change which these approaches of winter were making in the scene. 'We have had 'some tremendous hurricanes at Lausanne. It is an extraordinary 'place now for wind, being peculiarly situated among mountains— 'between the Jura, and the Simplon, St. Gothard, St. Bernard, and 'Mont Blanc ranges; and at night you would swear (lying in bed) 'you were at sea. You cannot imagine wind blowing so, over 'earth. It is very fine to hear. The weather generally, however, 'has been excellent. There is snow on the tops of nearly all the 'hills, but none has fallen in the valley. On a bright day, it is

Mountain winds.

Pleasures of autumn.

* 'I may tell you,' he wrote to me from Paris at the end of November, 'now it is all over. I don't know 'whether it was the hot summer, or 'the anxiety of the two new books 'coupled with *D. N.* remembrances 'and reminders, but I was in that 'state in Switzerland, when my spirits 'sunk so, I felt myself in serious 'danger. Yet I had little pain in my 'side; excepting that time at Genoa 'I have hardly had any since poor 'Mary died, when it came on so 'badly; and I walked my fifteen miles 'a day constantly, at a great pace.'

Lausanne 1846.

'quite hot between eleven and half-past two. The nights and 'mornings are cold. For the last two or three days, it has been 'thick weather; and I can see no more of Mont Blanc from where 'I am writing now than if I were in Devonshire-terrace, though 'last week it bounded all the Lausanne walks. I would give a 'great deal that you could take a walk with me about Lausanne on 'a clear cold day. It is impossible to imagine anything more 'noble and beautiful than the scene; and the autumn colours in 'the foliage are more brilliant and vivid now than any description 'could convey to you. I took Elliotson, when he was with us, up 'to a ravine I had found out in the hills eight hundred or a thou-'sand feet deep! Its steep sides dyed bright yellow, and deep 'red, by the changing leaves; a sounding torrent roaring down 'below; the lake of Geneva lying at its foot; one enormous mass 'and chaos of trees at its upper end; and mountain piled on 'mountain in the distance, up into the sky! He really was struck 'silent by its majesty and splendour.'

A ravine in the hills.

He had begun his third number of *Dombey* on the 26th of October, on the 4th of the following month he was half through it, on the 7th he was in 'the agonies' of its last chapter, and on the 9th, one day before that proposed for its completion, all was done. This was marvellously rapid work, after what else he had undergone; but within a week, Monday the 16th being the day for departure, they were to strike their tents, and troubled and sad were the few days thus left him for preparation and farewell. He included in his leave-taking his deaf, dumb, and blind friends; and, to use his own homely phrase, was yet more terribly 'down 'in the mouth' at taking leave of his hearing, speaking, and seeing friends. 'I shall see you soon, please God, and that sets all to 'rights. But I don't believe there are many dots on the map of 'the world where we shall have left such affectionate remembrances 'behind us, as in Lausanne. It was quite miserable this last night 'when we left them at Haldimand's.'

Striking tents.

Sadness of leave-taking

He shall himself describe how they travelled post to Paris, occupying five days. 'We got through the journey charmingly, though 'not quite so quickly as we hoped. The children as good 'usual, and even Skittles *jolly* to the last. That name has l

'superseded Sampson Brass, by the bye (*ante*, 461). I call him 'so, from something skittle-playing and public-housey in his counte- 'nance. We have been up at five every morning, and on the 'road before seven. We were three carriages: a sort of waggon, 'with a cabriolet attached, for the luggage; a ramshackle villainous 'old swing upon wheels (hired at Geneva), for the children; and 'for ourselves, that travelling chariot which I was so kind as to 'bring here for sale. It was very cold indeed crossing the Jura— 'nothing but fog and frost; but when we were out of Switzerland 'and across the French frontier, it became warmer, and continued 'so. We stopped at between six and seven each evening; had 'two rather queer inns, wild French country inns; but the rest 'good. They were three hours and a half examining the luggage 'at the frontier custom-house—atop of a mountain, in a hard and 'biting frost; where Anne and Roche had sharp work I assure 'you, and the latter insisted on volunteering the most astonishing 'and unnecessary lies about my books, for the mere pleasure of 'deceiving the officials. When we were out of the mountain 'country, we came at a good pace, but were a day late in getting 'to our hotel here.'

Post for Paris: 1846.

Travelling to Paris.

They were in Paris when that was written; at the hotel Brighton; which they had reached in the evening of Friday the 20th of November.

VII.

THREE MONTHS IN PARIS.

1846—1847.

No man enjoyed brief residence in a hotel more than Dickens, but 'several tons of luggage, other tons of servants, and other tons 'of children' are not desirable accompaniments to this kind of life; and his first day in Paris did not close before he had offered for an 'eligible mansion.' That same Saturday night he took a

Paris: 1846

Paris: 1846.

'colossal' walk about the city, of which the brilliancy and brightness almost frightened him; and among other things that attracted his notice was 'rather a good book announced in a bookseller's 'window as *Les Mystères de Londres par Sir Trollopp*. Do you 'know him?' A countryman better known had given him early greeting. 'The first man who took hold of me in the street 'immediately outside this door, was Bruffum in his check trousers, 'and without the proper number of buttons on his shirt, who was 'going away this morning, he told me, but coming back in two 'months, when we would go and dine—at some place known to 'him and fame.'

Lord Brougham.

Next day he took another long walk about the streets, and lost himself fifty times. This was Sunday, and he hardly knew what to say of it, as he saw it there and then. The bitter observance of that day he always sharply resisted, believing a little rational enjoyment to be not opposed to either rest or religion; but here was another matter. 'The dirty churches, and the clattering carts 'and waggons, and the open shops (I don't think I passed fifty 'shut up, in all my strollings in and out), and the work-a-day 'dresses and drudgeries, are not comfortable. Open theatres and 'so forth I am well used to, of course, by this time; but so much 'toil and sweat on what one would like to see, apart from religious 'observances, a sensible holiday, is painful.'

French Sunday.

The date of his letter was the 22nd of November, and it had three postscripts.* The first, 'Monday afternoon,' told me a house was taken; that, unless the agreement should break off on any unforeseen fight between Roche and the agent ('a French Mrs. 'Gamp'), I was to address him at No. 48, Rue de Courcelles, Faubourg St. Honoré; and that he would merely then advert to the

A house taken.

* It had also the mention of another floating fancy for the weekly periodical which was still and always present to his mind, and which settled down at last, as the reader knows, into *Household Words*. 'As to the Review, I 'strongly incline to the notion of a 'kind of *Spectator* (Addison's)—very 'cheap, and pretty frequent. We must 'have it thoroughly discussed. It 'would be a great thing to found 'something. If the mark between a 'sort of *Spectator*, and a different sort 'of *Athenæum*, could be well hit, my 'belief is that a deal might be done. 'But it should be something with a 'marked and distinctive and obvious 'difference, in its design, from any 'other existing periodical.'

premises as in his belief the 'most ridiculous, extraordinary, un- PARIS: 1846.
'paralleled, and preposterous' in the whole world; being something between a baby-house, a 'shades,' a haunted castle, and a mad kind of clock. 'They belong to a Marquis Castellan, and you 'will be ready to die of laughing when you go over them.' The second P.S. declared that his lips should be sealed till I beheld for myself. 'By Heaven it is not to be imagined by the mind of 'man!' The third P.S. closed the letter. 'One room is a tent. 'Another room is a grove. Another room is a scene at the Vic- His French abode.
'toria. The upstairs rooms are like fanlights over street-doors. 'The nurseries—but no, no, no, no more! . .'

His following letter nevertheless sent more, even in the form of an additional protestation that never till I saw it should the place be described. 'I will merely observe that it is fifty yards long, 'and eighteen feet high, and that the bedrooms are exactly like 'opera-boxes. It has its little courtyard and garden, and porter's Its absurdity.
'house and cordon to open the door, and so forth; and is a Paris 'mansion in little. There is a gleam of reason in the drawing-'room. Being a gentleman's house, and not one furnished to let, 'it has some very curious things in it; some of the oddest things 'you ever beheld in your life; and an infinity of easy chairs and 'sofas. . . . Bad weather. It is snowing hard. There is not a 'door or window here—but that's nothing! there's not a door or 'window in all Paris—that shuts; not a chink in all the billions 'of trillions of chinks in the city that can be stopped to keep the 'wind out. And the cold!—but you shall judge for yourself; A former tenant.
'and also of this preposterous dining-room. The invention, sir, 'of Henry Bulwer, who when he had executed it (he used to live 'here), got frightened at what he had done, as well he might, and 'went away . . . The Brave called me aside on Saturday night, 'and showed me an improvement he had effected in the decorative 'way. "Which," he said, "will very much s'prize Mis'r Fors'er '"when he come." You are to be deluded into the belief that 'there is a perspective of chambers twenty miles in length, 'opening from the drawing-room. . .'

My visit was not yet due, however, and what occupied or interested him in the interval may first be told. He had not

PARIS: 1846.

Sister's illness.

been two days in Paris when a letter from his father made h very anxious for the health of his eldest sister. 'I was going 'the play (a melodrama in eight acts, five hours long), but had 'the heart to leave home after my father's letter,' he is writ on the 30th of November, 'and sent Georgy and Kate by the 'selves. There seems to be no doubt whatever that Fanny is 'a consumption.' She had broken down in an attempt to sing a party in Manchester; and subsequent examination by S Charles Bell's nephew, who was present and took much intere in her, sadly revealed the cause. 'He advised that neither sh 'nor Burnett should be told the truth, and my father has n 'disclosed it. In worldly circumstances they are very com 'fortable, and they are very much respected. They seem to l 'happy together, and Burnett has a great deal of teaching. Yo 'remember my fears about her when she was in London the ti 'of Alfred's marriage, and that I said she looked to me as if s

Opinion of Elliotson.

'were in a decline? Kate took her to Elliotson, who said th 'her lungs were certainly not affected then. And she cried 'joy. Don't you think it would be better for her to be brou 'up, if possible, to see Elliotson again? I am deeply, dee 'grieved about it.' This course was taken, and for a time th seemed room for hope; but the result will be seen. In the sa letter I heard of poor Charles Sheridan, well known to us b

English Ambassador.

dying of the same terrible disease; and his chief, Lord Norman whose many acts of sympathy and kindness had inspired stro regard in Dickens, he had already found 'as informal and go 'natured as ever, but not so gay as usual, and having an anxi 'haggard way with him, as if his responsibilities were more th 'he had bargained for.' Nor, to account for this, had Dickens to seek, when a little leisure enabled him to see something of what was passing in Paris during that last year of Louis Philipp reign. What first impressed him most unfavourably was a glim in the Champs Elysées of the King himself coming in from

King of the barricades.

country. 'There were two carriages. His was surrounded 'horseguards. It went at a great pace, and he sat very far b 'in a corner of it, I promise you. It was strange to an Engli 'man to see the Prefet of Police riding on horseback so

'hundreds of yards in advance of the cortége, turning his head 'incessantly from side to side, like a figure in a Dutch clock, and 'scrutinizing everybody and everything, as if he suspected all the 'twigs in all the trees in the long avenue.' PARIS: 1846.

But these and other political indications were only, as they generally prove to be, the outward signs of maladies more deeply-seated. He saw almost everywhere signs of canker eating into the heart of the people themselves. 'It is a wicked and detestable 'place, though wonderfully attractive; and there can be no better 'summary of it, after all, than Hogarth's unmentionable phrase.' He sent me no letter that did not contribute something of observation or character. He went at first rather frequently to the Morgue, until shocked by something so repulsive that he had not courage for a long time to go back; and on that same occasion he had noticed the keeper smoking a short pipe at his little window, 'and giving a bit of fresh turf to a linnet in a cage.' Of the condition generally of the streets he reported badly; the quays on the other side of the Seine were not safe after dark; and here was his own night experience of one of the best quarters of the city. 'I took Georgy out, the night before last, to show 'her the Palais Royal lighted up; and on the Boulevard, a street 'as bright as the brightest part of the Strand or Regent-street, we 'saw a man fall upon another, close before us, and try to tear 'the cloak off his back. It was in a little dark corner near the 'Porte St. Denis, which stands out in the middle of the street. 'After a short struggle, the thief fled (there were thousands of 'people walking about), and was captured just on the other side of 'the road.' Unhealthy symptoms. The Morgue. Incident in streets.

An incident of that kind might mean little or much: but what he proceeded to remark of the ordinary Parisian workpeople and smaller shopkeepers, had a more grave complexion; and may be thought perhaps still to yield some illustration, not without value, to the story of the quarter of a century that has passed since, and even to some of the appalling events of its latest year or two. 'It is extraordinary what nonsense English people talk, write, and 'believe, about foreign countries. The Swiss (so much decried) 'will do anything for you, if you are frank and civil; they are Parisian population.

Paris: 1846.

'attentive and punctual in all their dealings; and may be relied 'upon as steadily as the English. The Parisian workpeople and 'smaller shopkeepers are more like (and unlike) Americans than 'I could have supposed possible. To the American indifference 'and carelessness, they add a procrastination and want of the 'least heed about keeping a promise or being exact, which is cer- 'tainly not surpassed in Naples. They have the American semi- 'sentimental independence too, and none of the American vigour 'or purpose. If they ever get free trade in France (as I suppose 'they will, one day) these parts of the population must, for years 'and years, be ruined. They couldn't get the means of existence, 'in competition with the English workmen. Their inferior 'manual dexterity, their lazy habits, perfect unreliability, and 'habitual insubordination, would ruin them in any such contest, 'instantly. They are fit for nothing but soldiering—and so far, I 'believe, the successors in the policy of your friend Napoleon 'have reason on their side. Eh bien, mon ami, quand vous 'venez à Paris, nous nous mettrons à quatre épingles, et nous 'verrons toutes les merveilles de la cité, et vous en jugerez. God 'bless me, I beg your pardon! It comes so natural.'

Americans and Parisians.

On the 30th he wrote to me that he had got his papers into order and hoped to begin that day. But the same letter told me of the unsettlement thus early of his half-formed Paris plans. Three months sooner than he designed he should be due in London for family reasons; should have to keep within the limit of four months abroad; and as his own house would not be free till July, would have to hire one from the end of March. 'In 'these circumstances I think I shall send Charley to King's- 'college after Christmas. I am sorry he should lose so much 'French, but don't you think to break another half-year's schooling 'would be a pity? Of my own will I would not send him to 'King's-college at all, but to Bruce-castle instead. I suppose, 'however, Miss Coutts is best. We will talk over all this when I 'come to London.' The offer to take charge of his eldest son's education had been pressed upon Dickens by this true friend, to whose delicate and noble consideration for him it would hardly become me to make other allusion here. Munificent as the kind-

Unsettlement of plans.

Eldest son's education.

ness was, however, it was yet only the smallest part of the obligation which Dickens felt that he owed this lady; to whose generous schemes for the neglected and uncared-for classes of the population, in all which he deeply sympathised, he did the very utmost to render, through many years, unstinted service of time and labour, with sacrifices unselfish as her own. His proposed early visit to London, named in this letter, was to see the rehearsal of his Christmas story, dramatised by Mr. Albert Smith for Mr. and Mrs. Keeley at the Lyceum; and my own proposed visit to Paris was to be in the middle of January. 'It will then be the height 'of the season, and a good time for testing the unaccountable 'French vanity which really does suppose there are no fogs here, 'but that they are all in London.'

PARIS: 1846.

Christmas tale on the stage.

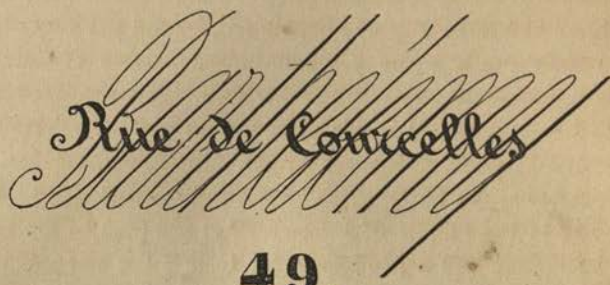
The opening of his next letter, which bore date the 6th of December, and its amusing sequel, will sufficiently speak for themselves. 'Cold intense. The water in the bed-room jugs freezes 'into solid masses from top to bottom, bursts the jugs with reports 'like small cannon, and rolls out on the tables and wash-stands, 'hard as granite. I stick to the shower-bath, but have been most 'hopelessly out of sorts—writing sorts; that's all. Couldn't 'begin, in the strange place; took a violent dislike to my study, 'and came down into the drawing-room; couldn't find a corner 'that would answer my purpose; fell into a black contemplation 'of the waning month; sat six hours at a stretch, and wrote as 'many lines, &c. &c. &c. . . . Then, you know what arrange-'ments are necessary with the chairs and tables; and then what 'correspondence had to be cleared off; and then how I tried to 'settle to my desk, and went about and about it, and dodged at 'it, like a bird at a lump of sugar. In short I have just begun; 'five printed pages finished, I should say; and hope I shall be 'blessed with a better condition this next week, or I shall be 'behind-hand. I shall try to go at it—hard. I can't do more. '. . . There is rather a good man lives in this street, and I have 'had a correspondence with him which is preserved for your 'inspection. His name is Barthélemy. He wears a prodigious 'Spanish cloak, a slouched hat, an immense beard, and long black

Out of (writing) sorts.

A neighbour.

Paris: 1846.

'hair. He called the other day, and left his card. Allow me to 'enclose his card, which has originality and merit.



49.

Fellow-littérateur.

'Roche said I wasn't at home. Yesterday, he wrote me to say 'that he too was a "Littérateur"—that he had called, in com- 'pliment to my distinguished reputation—"qu'il n'avait pas été '"reçu—qu'il n'était pas habitué à cette sorte de procédé—et '"qu'il pria Monsieur Dickens d'oublier son nom, sa mémoire, '"sa carte, et sa visite, et de considérer qu'elle n'avait pas été '"rendu!" Of course I wrote him a very polite reply imme- 'diately, telling him good-humouredly that he was quite mistaken, 'and that there were always two weeks in the beginning of every 'month when M. Dickens ne pouvait rendre visite à personne. 'He wrote back to say that he was more than satisfied; that it 'was his case too, at the end of every month; and that when

Startling blue-devils!

'busy himself, he not only can't receive or pay visits, but— '"tombe, généralement, aussi, dans des humeurs noires qui '"approchent de l'anthropophagie!!!" I think that's pretty 'well.'

He was in London eight days, from the 15th to the 23rd of December;* and among the occupations of his visit, besides launching his little story on the stage, was the settlement of form for a cheap edition of his writings, which began in the following year. It was to be printed in double columns, and issued weekly in three-halfpenny numbers; there were to be new prefaces, but

* 'I shall bring the Brave, though I have no use for him. He'd die if 'I didn't.'

no illustrations; and for each book something less than a fourth of the original price was to be charged. Its success was very good, but did not come even near to the mark of the later issues of his writings. His own feeling as to this, however, though any failure at the moment affected him on other grounds, was always that of a quiet confidence; and he had expressed this in a proposed dedication of this very edition, which for other reasons was ultimately laid aside. It will be worth preserving here. 'This 'cheap edition of my books is dedicated to the English people, 'in whose approval, if the books be true in spirit, they will live, 'and out of whose memory, if they be false, they will very soon 'die.'

LONDON VISIT: December, 1846.

Cheap edition of works.

Upon his return to Paris I had frequent report of his progress with his famous fifth number, on the completion of which I was to join him. The day at one time seemed doubtful. 'It would be 'miserable to have to work while you were here. Still, I make 'such sudden starts, and am so possessed of what I am going to 'do, that the fear may prove to be quite groundless, and if any 'alteration would trouble you, let the 13th stand at all hazards.' The cold he described as so intense, and the price of fuel so enormous, that though the house was not half warmed ('as you'll 'say, when you feel it') it cost him very near a pound a day. Begging-letter writers had found out 'Monsieur Dickens, le ro- 'mancier célèbre,' and waylaid him at the door and in the street as numerously as in London: their distinguishing peculiarity being that they were nearly all of them 'Chevaliers de la Garde Impériale 'de sa Majesté Napoléon le Grand,' and that their letters bore immense seals with coats of arms as large as five shilling pieces. His friends the Watsons passed new year's day with him on their way to Rockingham from Lausanne, leaving that country covered with snow and the Bise blowing cruelly over it, but describing it as nothing to the cold of Paris. On the day that closed the old year he had gone into the Morgue and seen an old man with grey head lying there. 'It seemed the strangest thing in the world 'that it should have been necessary to take any trouble to stop 'such a feeble, spent, exhausted morsel of life. It was just dusk 'when I went in; the place was empty; and he lay there, all

Return to Paris.

Begging-letter-writers.

A tenant of the Morgue.

Paris: 1847.

'alone, like an impersonation of the wintry eighteen hundred and 'forty-six. . . . I find I am getting inimitable, so I'll stop.'

The time for my visit having come, I had grateful proof of the minute and thoughtful provision characteristic of him in everything. Dinner had been ordered to the second at Boulogne, a place in the malle-poste taken, and these and other services announced in a letter, which, by way of doing its part also in the kindly work of preparation, broke out into French. He never spoke that language very well, his accent being somehow defective; but he practised himself into writing it with remarkable ease and fluency. 'I have written to the Hôtel des Bains at 'Boulogne to send on to Calais and take your place in the 'malle-poste. . . Of course you know that you'll be assailed with 'frightful shouts all along the two lines of ropes from all the 'touters in Boulogne, and of course you'll pass on like the prin-'cess who went up the mountain after the talking bird; but don't 'forget quietly to single out the Hôtel des Bains commissionnaire.

Imaginary dialogue.

'The following circumstances will then occur. My experience is 'more recent than yours, and I will throw them into a dramatic 'form. . . You are filtered into the little office, where there are 'some soldiers; and a gentleman with a black beard and a pen 'and ink sitting behind a counter. *Barbe Noire* (to the lord of 'L. I. F.). Monsieur, votre passeport. *Monsieur.* Monsieur, 'le voici! *Barbe Noire.* Où allez-vous, monsieur? *Monsieur.*

French-English.

'Monsieur, je vais à Paris. *Barbe Noire.* Quand allez-vous partir, 'monsieur? *Monsieur.* Monsieur, je vais partir aujourd'hui. 'Avec la malle-poste. *Barbe Noire.* C'est bien. (To Gendarme.) 'Laissez sortir monsieur! *Gendarme.* Par ici, monsieur, s'il vous 'plait. Le gendarme ouvert une très petite porte. Monsieur se 'trouve subitement entouré de tous les gamins, agents, commis-'sionnaires, porteurs, et polissons, en général, de Boulogne, qui 's'élancent sur lui, en poussant des cris épouvantables. Monsieur 'est, pour le moment, tout-à-fait effrayé, bouleversé. Mais mon-'sieur reprend ses forces et dit, de haute voix: "Le Commis-'"sionnaire de l'Hôtel des Bains!" *Un petit homme* (s'avançant 'rapidement, et en souriant doucement). Me voici, monsieur. 'Monsieur Fors Tair, n'est-ce pas? . . .Alors . . . Alors mon-

'sieur se promène à l'Hôtel des Bains, où monsieur trouvera 'qu'un petit salon particulier, en haut, est déjà préparé pour sa 'réception, et que son dîner est déjà commandé, grace aux soins 'du brave Courier, *à midi et demi.* . . Monsieur mangera son 'dîner près du feu, avec beaucoup de plaisir, et il boirera de vin 'rouge à la santé de Monsieur de Boze, et sa famille intéressante 'et aimable. La malle-poste arrivera au bureau de la poste aux 'lettres à deux heures ou peut-être un peu plus tard. Mais 'monsieur chargera le commissionnaire d'y l'accompagner de 'bonne heure, car c'est beaucoup mieux de l'attendre que de la 'perdre. La malle-post arrivée, monsieur prendra sa place, aussi 'comfortablement qu'il le pourra, et il y restera jusqu'à son 'arrivée au bureau de la poste aux lettres à Paris. Parceque, 'le convoi (*train*) n'est pas l'affaire de monsieur, qui gardera sa 'place dans la malle-poste, sur le chemin de fer, et après le 'chemin de fer, jusqu'il se trouve à la basse-cour du bureau de 'la poste aux lettres à Paris, où il trouvera une voiture qui a été 'dépêché de la Rue de Courcelles, quarante-huit. Mais monsieur 'aura la bonté d'observer—Si le convoi arriverait à Amiens après 'le départ du convoi à minuit, il faudrait y rester jusqu'à l'arrivée 'd'un autre convoi à trois heures moins un quart. En attendant, 'monsieur peut rester au buffet (*refreshment room*), où l'on peut 'toujours trouver un bon feu, et du café chaud, et de très bonnes 'choses à boire et à manger, pendant toute la nuit.—Est-ce que 'monsieur comprend parfaitement toutes ces règles?—Vive le 'Roi des Français! Roi de la nation la plus grande, et la plus 'noble, et la plus extraordinairement merveilleuse, du monde! 'A bas les Anglais!

PARIS: 1847.

Citizen Dickens.

'CHARLES DICKENS,
'Français naturalisé, et Citoyen de Paris.'

We passed a fortnight together, and crowded into it more than might seem possible to such a narrow space. With a dreadful insatiability we passed through every variety of sight-seeing, prisons, palaces, theatres, hospitals, the Morgue and the Lazare, as well as the Louvre, Versailles, St. Cloud, and all the spots made memorable by the first revolution. The excellent comedian

Sight-seeing.

Paris: 1847.

Regnier, known to us through Macready and endeared by many kindnesses, incomparable for his knowledge of the city and unwearying in friendly service, made us free of the green-room of the Français, where, on the birthday of Molière, we saw his 'Don Juan' revived. At the Conservatoire we witnessed the masterly teaching of Samson; at the Odéon saw a new play by Ponsard, done but indifferently; at the Variétés 'Gentil-Bernard,' with four grisettes as if stepped out of a picture by Watteau; at the Gymnase 'Clarisse Harlowe,' with a death-scene of Rose Cheri which comes back to me, through the distance of time, as the prettiest piece of pure and gentle stage-pathos in my memory; at the Porte St. Martin 'Lucretia Borgia' by Hugo; at the Cirque, scenes of the great revolution, and all the battles of Napoleon; at the Comic Opera, 'Gibby'; and at the Palais Royal the usual new-year's piece, in which Alexandre Dumas was shown in his study beside a pile of quarto volumes five feet high, which proved to be the first tableau of the first act of the first piece to be played on the first night of his new theatre. That new theatre, the Historique, we also saw verging to a very short-lived completeness; and we supped with Dumas himself, and with Eugène Sue, and met Théophile Gautier and Alphonse Karr. We saw Lamartine also, and had much friendly intercourse with Scribe, and with the kind good-natured Amedée Pichot. One day we visited in the Rue du Bac the sick and ailing Chateaubriand, whom we thought like Basil Montagu; found ourselves at the other extreme of opinion in the sculpture-room of David d'Angers; and closed that day at the house of Victor Hugo, by whom Dickens was received with infinite courtesy and grace. The great writer then occupied a floor in a noble corner-house in the Place Royale, the old quarter of Ninon l'Enclos and the people of the Regency, of whom the gorgeous tapestries, the painted ceilings, the wonderful carvings and old golden furniture, including a canopy of state out of some palace of the middle age, quaintly and grandly reminded us. He was himself, however, the best thing we saw; and I find it difficult to associate the attitudes and aspect in which the world has lately wondered at him, with the sober grace and self-possessed quiet gravity of that night of

Alexandre Dumas.

Famous Frenchmen.

twenty-five years ago. Just then Louis Philippe had ennobled him, but the man's nature was written noble. Rather under the middle size, of compact close-buttoned-up figure, with ample dark hair falling loosely over his close-shaven face, I never saw upon any features so keenly intellectual such a soft and sweet gentility, and certainly never heard the French language spoken with the picturesque distinctness given to it by Victor Hugo. He talked of his childhood in Spain, and of his father having been Governor of the Tagus in Napoleon's wars; spoke warmly of the English people and their literature; declared his preference for melody and simplicity over the music then fashionable at the Conservatoire; referred kindly to Ponsard, laughed at the actors who had murdered his tragedy at the Odéon, and sympathized with the dramatic venture of Dumas. To Dickens he addressed very charming flattery, in the best taste; and my friend long remembered the enjoyment of that evening.

Paris: 1847. With Victor Hugo.

There is little to add of our Paris holiday, if indeed too much has not been said already. We had an adventure with a drunken coachman, of which the sequel showed at least the vigour and decisiveness of the police in regard to hired vehicles * in those

* Dickens's first letter after my return described it to me. 'Do you 'remember my writing a letter to the 'prefet of police about that coach-'man? I heard no more about it until 'this very day' (12th of February), 'when, at the moment of your letter 'arriving, Roche put his head in at 'the door (I was busy writing in the 'Baronial drawing-room) and said, '"Here is datter cocher!"—Sir, he 'had been in prison ever since! and 'being released this morning, was sent 'by the police to pay back the franc 'and a half, and to beg pardon, and 'to get a certificate that he had done 'so, or he could not go on the stand 'again! Isn't this admirable? But 'the culminating point of the story (it 'could happen with nobody but me) 'is that he WAS DRUNK WHEN HE 'CAME!! Not very, but his eye was 'fixed, and he swayed in his sabots, 'and smelt of wine, and told Roche 'incoherently that he wouldn't have 'done it (committed the offence, that 'is) if the people hadn't made him. 'He seemed to be troubled with a 'phantasmagorial belief that all Paris 'had gathered round us that night in 'the Rue St. Honoré, and urged him 'on with frantic shouts. . . . Snow, 'frost, and cold. . . . The Duke of 'Bordeaux is very well, and dines at 'the Tuileries to-morrow. . . . *When* 'I have done, I will write you a bril-'liant letter. . . . Loves from all. . . 'Your blue and golden bed looks 'desolate.' The allusion to the Duc de Bordeaux was to remind me pleasantly of a slip of his own during our talk with Chateaubriand, when, at a loss to say something interesting to the old royalist, he bethought him to

Adventure with a coachman.

Paris: 1847.

last days of the Orleans monarchy. At the Bibliothèque Royale we were much interested by seeing, among many other priceless treasures, Gutenberg's types, Racine's notes in his copy of Sophocles, Rousseau's music, and Voltaire's note upon Frederick of Prussia's letter. Nor should I omit that in what Dickens then told me, of even his small experience of the social aspects of Paris, there seemed but the same disease which raged afterwards through the second Empire. Not many days after I left, all Paris was crowding to the sale of a lady of the demi-monde, Marie Duplessis, who had led the most brilliant and abandoned of lives, and left behind her the most exquisite furniture and the most voluptuous and sumptuous bijouterie. Dickens wished at one time to have pointed the moral of this life and death of which there was great talk in Paris while we were together. The disease of satiety, which only less often than hunger passes for a broken heart, had killed her. 'What do you want?' asked the most famous of the Paris physicians, at a loss for her exact complaint. At last she answered: 'To see my mother.' She was sent for; and there came a simple Breton peasant-woman clad in the quaint garb of her province, who prayed by her bed until she died. Wonderful was the admiration and sympathy; and it culminated when Eugène Sue bought her prayer-book at the sale. Our last talk before I quitted Paris, after dinner at the Embassy, was of the danger underlying all this, and of the signs also visible everywhere of the Napoleon-worship which the Orleanists themselves had most favoured. Accident brought Dickens to England a fortnight later, when again we met together, at Gore-house, the self-contained reticent man whose doubtful inheritance was thus rapidly preparing to fall to him.*

Premonitory symptoms.

Death of Marie Duplessis.

Napoleon inheritance ready.

enquire with sympathy when he had last seen the representative of the elder branch of Bourbons, as if he were resident in the city then and there!

At Gore-house, 21st February.

* This was on Sunday, the 21st of February, when a party were assembled of whom I think the French Emperor, his cousin the Prince Napoleon, Doctor Quin, Dickens's eldest son, and myself, are now the only survivors. (Since the date of this note, another and the most distinguished of the guests has also passed away.) Lady Blessington had received the day before from her brother Major Power, who held a military appointment in Hobart Town, a small oil-painting of a girl's face by the murderer Wainewright (mentioned on a former page,

The accident was the having underwritten his number of *Dombey* by two pages, which there was not time to supply otherwise than by coming to London to write them.* This was done accordingly; but another greater trouble followed. He had hardly returned to Paris when his eldest son, whom I had brought to England with me and placed in the house of Doctor Major, then head-master of King's-college-school, was attacked by scarlet fever; and this closed prematurely Dickens's residence in Paris. But though he and his wife at once came over, and were followed after some days by the children and their aunt, the isolation of the little invalid could not so soon be broken through. His father at last saw him, nearly a month before the rest, in a lodging in Albany-street, where his grandmother, Mrs. Hogarth, had devoted herself to the charge of him; and an incident of the visit, which amused us all very much, will not unfitly introduce the subject that waits me in my next chapter.

PARIS: 1847.

Illness of eldest son.

Visit of his father.

An elderly charwoman employed about the place had shown so much sympathy in the family trouble, that Mrs. Hogarth specially told her of the approaching visit, and who it was that was coming to the sick-room. 'Lawk ma'am!' she said. 'Is

ante, 121, as having been seen by us together in Newgate), who was among the convicts there under sentence of transportation, and who had contrived somehow to put the expression of his own wickedness into the portrait of a nice kind-hearted girl. Major Power knew nothing of the man's previous history at this time, and had employed him on the painting out of a sort of charity. As soon as the truth went back, Wainewright was excluded from houses before open to him, and shortly after died very miserably. What Reynolds said of portrait painting, to explain its frequent want of refinement, that a man could only put into a face what he had in himself, was forcibly shown in this incident. The villain's story altogether moved Dickens to the same interest as it had excited in another profound student of humanity (Sir Edward Lytton), and, as will be seen, he also introduced him into one of his later writings.

* '. . . I am horrified to find that 'the first chapter makes *at least* two 'pages less than I had supposed, and 'I have a terrible apprehension that 'there will not be copy enough for the 'number! As it could not possibly 'come out short, and as there would 'be no greater possibility of sending 'to me, in this short month, to supply 'what may be wanted, I decide— 'after the first burst of nervousness is 'gone—*to follow this letter by Dili-* '*gence to-morrow morning.* The malle- 'poste is full for days and days. I 'shall hope to be with you some 'time on Friday.' Paris: Wednesday, 17th February, 1847.

A number underwritten.

PARIS: 1847.

The 'man 'that put 'together 'Dombey.'

'the young gentleman upstairs the son of the man that put 'together *Dombey?*' Reassured upon this point, she explained her question by declaring that she never thought there was a man that *could* have put together *Dombey*. Being pressed farther as to what her notion was of this mystery of a *Dombey* (for it was known she could not read), it turned out that she lodged at a snuff-shop kept by a person named Douglas, where there were several other lodgers; and that on the first Monday of every month there was a Tea, and the landlord read the month's number of *Dombey*, those only of the lodgers who subscribed to the tea partaking of that luxury, but all having the benefit of the reading; and the impression produced on the old charwoman revealed itself in the remark with which she closed her account of it. 'Lawk ma'am! I thought that three or four men must have put 'together *Dombey!*' Dickens thought there was something of a compliment in this, and was not ungrateful.

Snuff-shop readings.

APPENDIX.

THE WRITINGS OF CHARLES DICKENS,

PUBLISHED DURING THE PERIOD COMPRISED IN THIS FIRST VOLUME.

1835.

SKETCHES BY BOZ. Illustrative of Every-day Life and Every-day People. (The detached papers collected under this title were in course of publication during this year, in the pages of the *Monthly Magazine* and the columns of the *Morning* and the *Evening Chronicle*.) 59; 64–65; 66; 70–71.

1836.

SKETCHES BY BOZ. Illustrative of Every-day Life and Every-day People. Two volumes: Illustrations by George Cruikshank. (Preface dated from Furnival's Inn, February 1836.) John Macrone.

THE POSTHUMOUS PAPERS OF THE PICKWICK CLUB. Edited by Boz. With Illustrations by R. Seymour and Phiz (Hablot Browne). (Nine numbers published monthly from April to December.) Chapman and Hall.

SUNDAY UNDER THREE HEADS. As it is; as Sabbath Bills would make it; as it might be made. By Timothy Sparks. Illustrated by H. K. B. (Hablot Browne). Dedicated (June 1836) to the Bishop of London. Chapman & Hall. 98.

THE STRANGE GENTLEMAN. A Comic Burletta, in two acts. By "Boz." (Performed at the St. James's Theatre, 29th of September 1836, and published with the imprint of 1837.) Chapman and Hall. 72.

THE VILLAGE COQUETTES. A Comic Opera, in two acts. By Charles Dickens. The Music by John Hullah. (Dedication to Mr. Braham is dated from Furnival's Inn, 15th of December 1836.) Richard Bentley. 72.

SKETCHES BY BOZ. Illustrated by George Cruikshank. Second Series. One volume. (Preface dated from Furnival's Inn, 17th of December 1836.) John Macrone.

1837.

THE POSTHUMOUS PAPERS OF THE PICKWICK CLUB. Edited by Boz. (Eleven numbers, the last being a double number, published monthly from January to November. Issued complete in the latter month, with

Dedication to Mr. Serjeant Talfourd dated from Doughty-street, 27th of September, as *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club. By Charles Dickens.*) Chapman & Hall. 67–69; 80-85; and see (ii.) Book IX.

OLIVER TWIST; OR THE PARISH BOY'S PROGRESS. By Boz. Begun in *Bentley's Miscellany* for January, and continued throughout the year. Richard Bentley. (In the same *Miscellany* were published some short pieces not included among the similar pieces which the author afterwards collected with his name. There are others, in his own later serial publications, to which the same remark applies; but as a rule, though allusions to them will be found in my text, I have not included them in this list. But as those which appeared in the first four volumes of the *Miscellany* can be briefly described, and are some illustration of the outset of the writer's literary life, I give the list as sent to me by a friendly correspondent: '1. *Public Life of Tulrumble*, by Boz, vol. i. p. 49; 2. '*Pantomime of Life*, vol. i. p. 291; 3. *Particulars Concerning a Lion*, 'vol. i. p. 515; 4. *Full Report of the Mudfog Association*, vol. ii. p. 397; '5. *Full Report of the Second Meeting, &c.* vol. iv. p. 209.')

1838.

OLIVER TWIST. By Charles Dickens, Author of the Pickwick Papers. With Illustrations by George Cruikshank. Three volumes. (Had appeared in monthly portions, in the numbers of *Bentley's Miscellany* for 1837 and 1838, with the title of *Oliver Twist; or The Parish Boy's Progress.* By Boz. Illustrated by George Cruikshank. The Third Edition, with Preface dated Devonshire-terrace, March 1841, published by Messrs. Chapman & Hall.) Richard Bentley. 78; 80–81; 99–107: and see (ii.) Book IX.

MEMOIRS OF JOSEPH GRIMALDI. Edited by "Boz." Illustrated by George Cruikshank. Two volumes. (For Dickens's small share in the composition of this work, his preface to which is dated from Doughty-street, February 1838, see 92–93.) Richard Bentley.

SKETCHES OF YOUNG GENTLEMEN. Illustrated by Phiz. Chapman & Hall. 97–8.

LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF NICHOLAS NICKLEBY. By Charles Dickens. With Illustrations by Phiz (Hablot Browne). (Nine numbers published monthly from April to December.) Chapman & Hall.

1839.

LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF NICHOLAS NICKLEBY. (Eleven numbers, the last being a double number, published monthly from January to October. Issued complete in the latter month, with dedication to William Charles Macready.) Chapman & Hall. 95; 108–118; 353; 355; and see (ii.) Book IX.

SKETCHES BY BOZ. Illustrative of Every-day Life and Every-day People. With forty Illustrations by George Cruikshank. (The first complete edition, issued in monthly parts uniform with *Pickwick* and *Nickleby*, from November 1837 to June 1839, with preface dated 15th of May 1839.) Chapman & Hall. 77-80.

1840.

SKETCHES OF YOUNG COUPLES; with an urgent Remonstrance to the Gentlemen of England, being Bachelors or Widowers, at the present alarming crisis. By the Author of Sketches of Young Gentlemen. Illustrated by Phiz. Chapman & Hall. 97–8.

1840–1841.

MASTER HUMPHREY'S CLOCK. By Charles Dickens. With Illustrations by George Cattermole and Hablot Browne. Three volumes. (First and second volume, each 306 pp.; third, 426 pp.) For the account of this work, published in 88 weekly numbers, extending over the greater part of these two years, see 126–134; 160: 190–1. In addition to occasional detached papers and a series of sketches entitled MR. WELLER'S WATCH, occupying altogether about 90 pages of the first volume, 4 pages of the second, and 5 pages of the third, which have not yet appeared in any other collected form, this serial comprised the stories of the Old Curiosity Shop and Barnaby Rudge; each ultimately sold separately in a single volume, from which the pages of the *Clock* were detached. Chapman and Hall.

I. OLD CURIOSITY SHOP (1840).

Began at p. 37 of vol. i.; resumed at intervals up to the appearance of the ninth chapter; from the ninth chapter at p. 133, continued without interruption to the close of the volume (then issued with Dedication to Samuel Rogers, and preface from Devonshire-terrace dated September 1840); resumed in the second volume, and carried on to the close of the tale at p. 223. 132–144; and see (ii.) Book IX.

II. BARNABY RUDGE (1841).

Introduced by brief paper from Master Humphrey (pp. 224–8), and carried to end of Chapter XII. in the closing 78 pages of volume ii., which was issued with a preface dated in March 1841. Chapter XIII. began the third volume, and the story closed with its 82nd chapter at p. 420; a closing paper from Master Humphrey (pp. 421–426) then winding up the Clock, of which the concluding volume was published with a preface dated November 1841. 87–88; 96-97; 105-107; 145–151; 155–166.

1841.

THE PIC-NIC PAPERS by Various Hands. Edited by Charles Dickens. With Illustrations by George Cruikshank, Phiz, &c. Three volumes. (To this Book, edited for the benefit of Mrs. Macrone, widow of his old publisher, Dickens contributed a preface and the opening story, the *Lamplighter*.) Henry Colburn. 80; 120; 160–161.

1842.

AMERICAN NOTES FOR GENERAL CIRCULATION. By Charles Dickens. Two volumes. Chapman and Hall. 296–308; 318.

Appendix.

1843.

THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT. With Illustrations by Hablot Browne. (Begun in January, and, up to the close of the year, twelve monthly numbers published.) Chapman & Hall.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL IN PROSE. Being a Ghost Story of Christmas. By Charles Dickens. With Illustrations by John Leech. (Preface dated December 1843.) Chapman & Hall. 325–6; 333; 342–348.

1844.

THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT. With Illustrations by Hablot Browne. (Eight monthly numbers issued, the last being a double number, between January and July; in which latter month the completed work was published, with dedication to Miss Burdett Coutts, and Preface dated 25th of June.) Chapman & Hall. 313–14; 318–19; 327-8; 335–42; 353–355; and see (ii.) Book IX.

EVENINGS OF A WORKING MAN. By John Overs. With a Preface relative to the Author, by Charles Dickens. (Dedication to Doctor Elliotson, and preface dated in June.) T. C. Newby. 359–360.

THE CHIMES: a Goblin Story of some Bells that Rang an Old Year out and a New Year in. By Charles Dickens. With Illustrations by Maclise R.A., Stanfield R.A., Richard Doyle, and John Leech. Chapman & Hall. 384–87; 389–394; 396–8; 406–8; 410.

1845.

THE CRICKET ON THE HEARTH. A Fairy Tale of Home. By Charles Dickens. With Illustrations by Maclise R.A., Stanfield R.A., Edwin Landseer R.A., Richard Doyle, and John Leech. (Dedication to Lord Jeffrey dated in December 1845.) Bradbury & Evans (for the Author). 429–431; 438–9; and see (ii.) Book VI. § 4.

1846.

PICTURES FROM ITALY. By Charles Dickens. (Published originally in the *Daily News* from January to March 1846, with the title of 'Travelling Letters written on the Road.') Bradbury & Evans (for the Author). 345; 356–7; 398–401; 418–9; 441–2.

DEALINGS WITH THE FIRM OF DOMBEY AND SON, WHOLESALE, RETAIL, AND FOR EXPORTATION. By Charles Dickens. With Illustrations by Hablot Browne. (Three monthly numbers published, from October to the close of the year.) Bradbury & Evans. (During this year Messrs. Bradbury & Evans published 'for the Author,' in numbers uniform with the other serials, and afterwards in a single volume, *The Adventures of Oliver Twist, or the Parish Boy's Progress*. By Charles Dickens. With 24 Illustrations by George Cruikshank. A new Edition, revised and corrected.)

THE BATTLE OF LIFE. A Love Story. By Charles Dickens. Illustrated by Maclise R.A., Stanfield R.A., Richard Doyle, and John Leech. (Dedicated to his 'English friends in Switzerland.') Bradbury & Evans (for the Author). 449; 457–8; 483–4; 486-90; 493–5; 500–506.

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